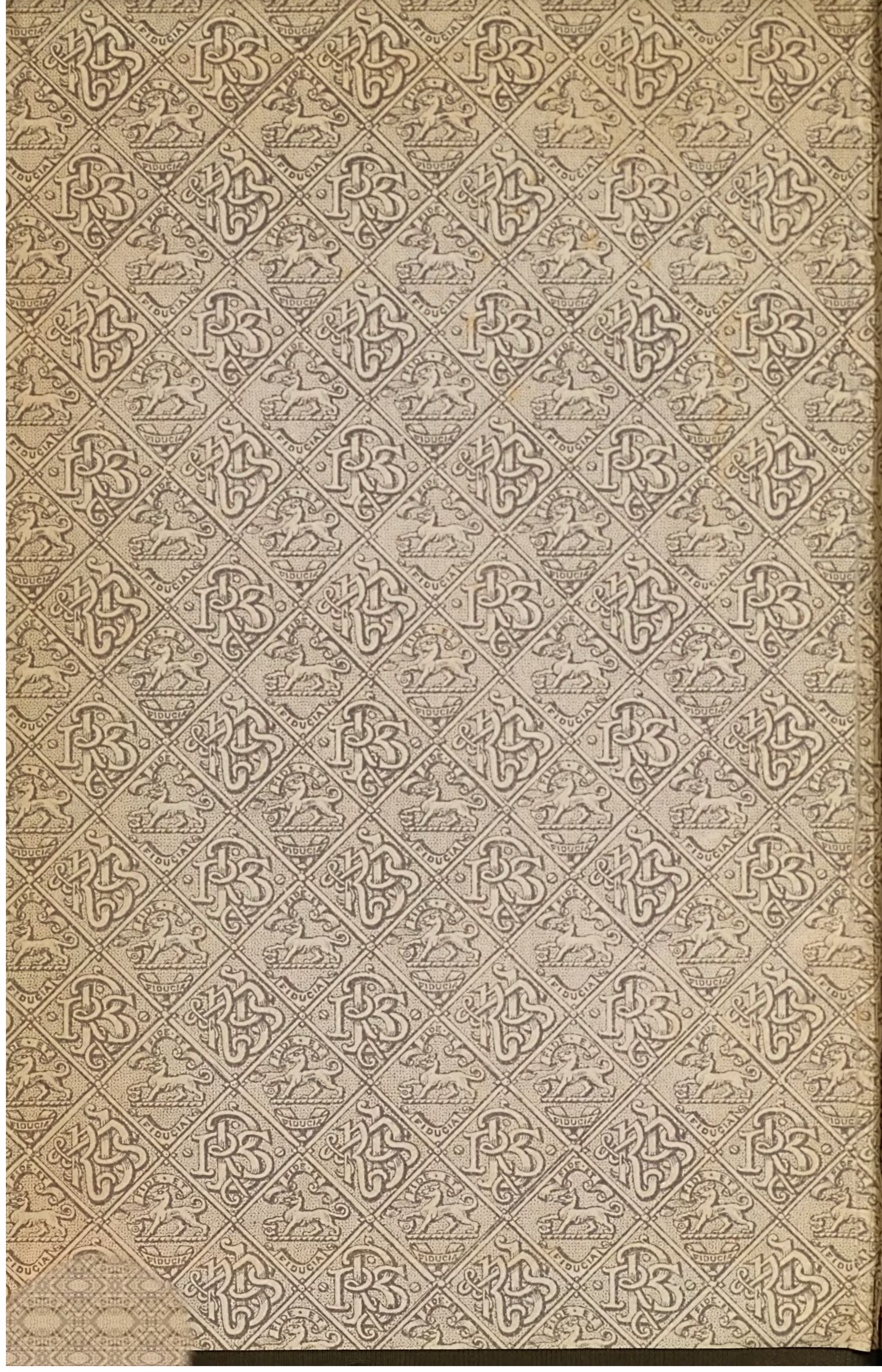














Bragr. 1177  $\pm$  Tuckerman



PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS  
OF  
NOTABLE PEOPLE







'Personal Recollections  
OF  
NOTABLE PEOPLE

*AT HOME AND ABROAD*

WITH OTHER PAPERS

BY

CHARLES K. TUCKERMAN

FIRST MINISTER RESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO GREECE

'An anecdote is worth a volume of biography'

CHANNING



IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON

RICHARD BENTLEY AND SON

Publishers in Ordinary to Her Majesty the Queen

1895

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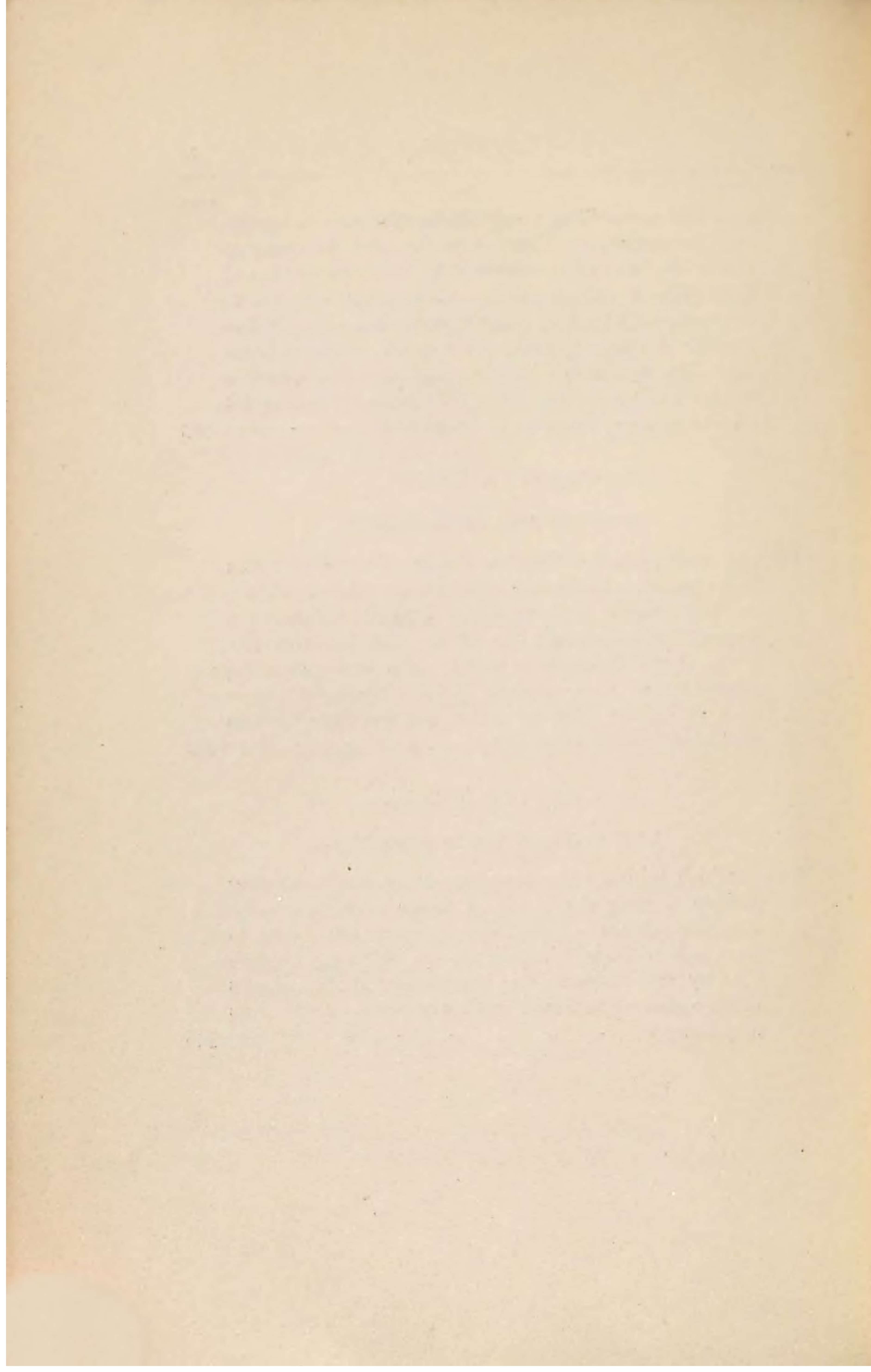
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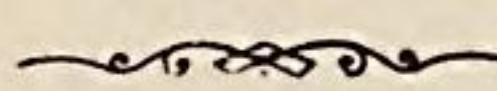
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# PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF NOTABLE PEOPLE



## CHAPTER XVII.

### PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF ENGLISH LITERARY MEN.

AMIDST the whirl, the roar, and the ceaseless passing of the panorama of London life, the stranger in the Metropolis little realizes that beneath the surface of things there is a quiet, invisible, earnest movement going on, indicating the vast extent and progress of intellectual thought. I believe that if one undertook to attend, nightly, a single meeting of a separate society, association, or private club devoted to literature, science, art, or other culture, in the city of London alone, it would require a year to complete the catalogue.

My first acquaintance with this phase of English life occurred one evening, when, at the invitation of a member, I attended the monthly meeting and



dinner of an association that meets for the discussion of questions of Political Economy. The dinner was at Willis's Rooms, and some twenty gentlemen sat down to it. My first glance at the faces around me, I must confess, was disappointing. But when my friend named to me, one after the other, who those gentlemen were, I felt more abashed than if I had found myself seated at a council-table of the sovereigns of Europe. The comparison is a poor one, for the whole body of crowned heads would scarcely have inspired a higher sentiment than curiosity, whereas these gentlemen represented some of the ripest intellects of England.

The discussion, after the cloth was removed, upon the topic of the evening was conducted in that low-voiced, conversational tone, discarding the slightest attempt at rhetoric, which, among Englishmen, characterizes such intercourse of thought. Halting in speech and bad in delivery as some among them were, all disposition to criticise mere mannerisms vanished, and I experienced only the enjoyment of an intellectual treat such as few places out of England produce in quality and kind.

Among those who took part in the discussion was John Stuart Mill, with whom I had the pleasure of a memorable conversation, it being my first and only meeting with that great moral and social philosopher.



His attenuated features showed the ravages of a disease which terminated his life soon after; but they were lighted up by deep reflective eyes that shone, when he spoke, with the fire of genius. He was interested in Greek affairs, and I subsequently sent him a book published in America on that subject, which he desired to read, and respecting which he promised to write me from Avignon. On his arrival there he laid the book on a table in his study with other works awaiting examination, but death intervened, and they remained unread by him. Mill did not 'found' a new school of theology, as has been said, but rather expounded, with rare acumen and courage, theories which would have become widespread and permanent but for the repressive power of popular fallacies walled around and protected in England by that national bulwark — established authority.

About the time I knew Mill, a mutual friend—to whom he had written in reply to a personal letter from himself—furnished me with a copy of this reply, in which occurs the following passage, indicating the tendency of his theological thought:

'There is, as you say, a very general and most natural "longing" among those who have outgrown the old forms of religious belief. I myself have more sympathy with the aspiration than hope to see it



gratified to the extent of any positive belief respecting the unknown world; but I am convinced that the cultivation of an imaginative hope is quite compatible with a reserve as to positive belief, and that whatever helps to keep before the mind the ideal of a perfect Being is of unspeakable value to human nature. Only it is essential, to prevent a perversion of the moral faculty, that the perfect Being, if regarded as the Creator of the world we live in, should not be thought to be omnipotent.'

Among scientists whom I met in London were Sir George Airy, Astronomer Royal, and Sir Charles Lyell, the famous geologist, the one searching the heavens for rays of scientific light, the other penetrating the earth for buried revelations. At Sir George Airy's table I met Struve, the Astronomer Imperial of Russia, celebrated for his researches and observations upon double stars, both he and our host being mundane stars of the first magnitude. Airy, at the time of my visit, was engaged in preparations for the English expedition to observe the transit of Venus. He showed and explained to us a very ingenious working model, constructed upon the roof of the observatory, by which we were enabled conveniently to witness the rare phenomenon in advance of the order of Nature.

Sir George was one of those calm, self-reliant men



who seldom give any outward evidence of the remarkable strength of character they possess. His sense of duty and rectitude overruled all selfish considerations. He once refused to recommend a relative for an official post, for which he was admirably fitted, solely because he was his relative; and when Palmerston offered to confer upon the retired astronomer a royal pension, he declined it, and begged that the money might be settled upon his wife. Even an increase of salary offered by the Government was refused by him until just before his resignation of the post, when he accepted the augmentation, in order that his successor might receive a salary more in accordance with the value of the services rendered. For forty years Airy presided over the intricate operations of the Observatory at Greenwich, and at the age of seventy-five, or thereabouts, he undertook a task so stupendous that most men half a century younger would have shrunk from it. It was no less than a new lunar theory, founded on that of Delaunay, the great French astronomer, who had been a friend of his. He abandoned everything to the prosecution of this great, indeed appalling, labour, which depended chiefly upon the numerical accuracy of hundreds of thousands of pages of figures, which, after years of toil, fell through in consequence of errors of calcula-



tion.\* To science it was like the sinking of a noble ship, after a laborious voyage, in very sight of land, from an undiscovered flaw in her construction.

I always felt it to be a great honour when Sir Charles Lyell made a visit to my house in London. He was suffering from the infirmities of age, and his eyesight was so impaired that he was always accompanied by a body-servant to see him in and out of his carriage. Indeed, on one occasion he tripped upon the staircase, and came very near falling down its entire length. Like his contemporary, Airy, Lyell was a remarkably modest and undemonstrative man, although most genial, and often humorous, in conversation. I do not recall any special observations of the distinguished geologist that could be recorded here as novelties, but he related one day at breakfast an anecdote of his friend Professor Huxley that is very characteristic of the latter. Huxley had been narrating to Lyell the proceedings at a scientific meeting, where the subject of fossil remains was being discussed. A clergyman present, whose simplicity of character seems to have been on a par with his reverential ideas, declared that it was wrong to disturb the

\* Letter from Colonel G. L. Tupman, R.A., who went in charge] of the two Government expeditions to observe the transit of Venus.



bones of the Silurian Period, as they might be the bones of fallen angels who fell into the slime after the deluge! Huxley did not say what was the effect of this original solution upon the risibles of the assembled savants, but it must have tickled them immensely.

‘Well,’ said Lyell, ‘did you pitch into him?’

‘No,’ replied Huxley, laughing, ‘I did not, for he was the only honest man present. He *believed*; the rest of us only speculated.’

It is said that Lyell influenced in no small degree the scientific mind of Dr. Darwin, the author of the ‘Origin of Species.’ However this may be, here is a good story of Darwin, which was told me by one of the family of the physician in attendance at the hydropathic establishment at Malvern where Darwin was at the time a patient. He was suffering from mental overwork, and had been strictly ordered to abstain during the ‘cure’ from books and study, and to take out-of-door exercise daily. One day the physician found him at his desk surrounded by open books, and busy with his pen. He was told to put them down at once, and to go out for a walk.

‘Impossible, doctor—impossible!’ said Darwin. ‘I am engaged upon a subject of paramount importance, and must not be disturbed.’



‘What subject is it, Dr. Darwin?’

‘The muscular movement of barnacles,’ he replied;  
‘greatly neglected—greatly neglected!’

I met Anthony Trollope, the novelist, at two dinner - parties in London. I had previously made his acquaintance in New York during his visit to America to write a book upon the country, which when it appeared proved to be as impartial and unprejudiced an account of things as a critic could well make who had brought with him a predisposition to like what he came to see. This was a matter of surprise to many who remembered with what acrimony and coarseness Mrs. Trollope, his mother, had scourged us in her book on America many years before. My brother was sitting in his library in New York, when, in response to his ‘Come in,’ the door flew open, and a stout, hairy-faced, ruddy-complexioned Englishman burst in upon his solitude like a rough shaggy Newfoundland dog about to leap upon him in the exuberance of animal spirits.

‘My name is Anthony Trollope!’ exclaimed the visitor in a brusque voice, ‘and I’ve brought you a letter of introduction from a mutual friend in England.’

In physique, manner, and speech he might have been taken for a dragoon in mufti, or a sportsman



fresh from an invigorating run in the fields ; certainly not for a novelist whose forte lay in depicting the salient traits of English clergymen, the delicate shades of character among English maidens, and in composing those inimitable love-letters which so plentifully bestrew the pages of his life-like romances. During his visit to New York, Trollope was introduced to many of our literary men, and to such social gatherings as might interest a man of his pursuits. He wore spectacles, through which he seemed to inspect men and things with a quiet scrutiny, as if making perpetual mental memoranda for future use. In conversation he would sometimes ask a question, or make a suggestion respecting people to whom he had been introduced, which indicated a keen perception of the weak spots in their characters ; but this was always said in a good-humoured way that left no sting behind it.\*

When we met at a dinner in London, Trollope asked me with some asperity why I had not come

\* Trollope and myself were present when George Bancroft, the historian, delivered an address before the New York Historical Society. Trollope had never before seen Bancroft, and he studied him closely. He made no remark until the speaker made a point which elicited applause, when he whispered in my ear : ‘ Do you suppose he himself believes what he is saying ? ’



in, instead of leaving a card at his house, a few days previous. I told him that as the servant, in reply to my inquiry, said he was in his library, I did not wish to intrude when, probably, he was in the midst of romance-writing, composing, perhaps, a love-letter from one of his heroines. 'What if I was?' he asked, grinning like a hyena behind his hairy visage. 'Romance-writing with me is a mere mechanical pursuit; it is a *business*, and I intend to bring up my son to the same occupation.'

I expressed my regret at such an avowal, and said that I should never take up his books with the same relish as before; something would be missing—a tinge of sentiment which connects the idea one forms of the author with the book one is reading. When the ladies left us to our cigars, the conversation fell, somehow or other, upon theology and the belief in a future state. One gentleman remarked that but for the hope of heaven this world would be a meaningless failure.

'That depends,' said another, 'upon what the bliss of heaven consists. If we are to be transformed—as we are instructed to believe—into winged angels playing upon harps and singing hallelujahs world without end, I trust that I may be permitted to remain in this mundane exist-



ence to the utmost span allotted to the life of man.'

'There is a good deal to be said on both sides of the question,' remarked Trollope; 'but if I thought I should never see dear old Thackeray again, I should be a very unhappy man.'

'Have you read Ouida's last novel?' I asked him, to change the subject of conversation.

'No,' he replied; 'I have never read any of her books. I promised her I would read one of them, and I suppose I shall have to do so—some time or other.'

There was a tinge of affectation, I thought, in this remark, which clashed with that blunt honesty which I had always associated with Trollope's character, and also, perhaps, a spice of literary jealousy. This should not have been so, for no two writers of romance could very well differ in style and treatment more distinctly than do these two. The high-coloured sentimentality of Ouida is as far removed from the every-day realities of Trollope as the magnificent effects of sunset vary from the shadowless light of noonday.

Although I do not venture in these memory notes to speak of living authors, the mention of Ouida recalls a pleasant picture of her former home in Florence, which she may pardon me for introducing



here. She occupied an apartment in one of those old historic palaces which lend to the City of Flowers much of its interest to strangers. Her *salon*, a spacious room, with high walls and decorated ceiling, was filled with a *mélange* of antique and modern furniture, where art vied with comfort. Upon the walls hung pictures, and on the tables lay the books, pamphlets, and magazines of the day, while bric-à-brac and vases of fresh flowers were scattered about in corners and on shelves with that eye to artistic effect which a veritable artist like Ouida so well understands. There, on almost any afternoon, the gifted novelist was always to be found by her intimate friends only—for curiosity visitors she abhors—with the tea-table in front of her, and her ever-open writing-desk near by; while at her feet—small feet, I may be permitted to add, clad in satin slippers, and peeping from the skirts of a voluminous robe of delicate texture—or on the hearth-rug, or on soft cushions in the corners, were her dogs, some half-dozen of them, of various breeds and sizes — all treasured pets and her constant companions. One perceived at a glance—even those not familiar with her inimitable dog-stories—what reciprocal devotion exists between the two, and how absolutely necessary to her happiness is the companionship of these faithful creatures. Indeed, this astute author's acquaint-



ance with human nature in its various phases inclines her at times to believe more in the honesty and fidelity of her four-footed companions than in the so-called 'nobler animal.'

Ouida does not always in her society novels give satisfaction to her moral readers, but if she had written nothing more than her pathetic stories of suffering animals under the cold-hearted cruelty of man, she would deserve to be supported by the friends of humanity in luxury and ease for the rest of her days, instead of having to depend, as she now does, upon unremitting exercise of brain and pen for the necessities of existence.

To return to London. At a luncheon at Lord Houghton's (Monckton Milne's) there were present, with others, Robert Browning, Motley the historian, and Joachim Miller—Motley more of a listener than a talker on that occasion, but expressing, as was his wont, very decided opinions when he did speak; Joachim Miller looking the dreamy poet all over, as he sat with his hair falling over his face, and gazing into his plate as if searching therein for a poetical idea.

The lunch over, and the guests standing about with their cigars, Browning came up to me, and taking from his breast-pocket some loose pages of 'The Ring and the Book,' printed in the United



States, handed them to me as evidence of our violation of the rights of foreign authors.

‘One of your publishers in America,’ he said, ‘is absolutely giving away my poem, distributing it gratis to travellers on the railway, while I get nothing for this piracy!’

He said this with an expression of mock indignation, but I fancied I perceived a latent satisfaction at the gratuitous appreciation of his genius by the American public. It seemed a pity to undeceive him by explaining that the free distribution in this way of the *first* pages of a new book is merely a bookseller’s device for advertising the book itself, and that the peddler who leaves these samples in the hands of passengers returns after awhile to gather them up and receive orders, if he can get them. I did so, however, and Browning, while amused, looked a little chagrined at the information. He was very keen, however, on the subject of copyright, and again charged the American publishers with piracy.

‘But,’ said I, ‘you are doing the same thing in England;’ and I enumerated a list of American authors, from Washington Irving to Hawthorne, whose works were reprinted and for sale in the London bookshops, without a penny’s remuneration to their authors. I instanced a work by my brother, which had not only been reprinted in this way,



but the title changed; while on the preface page were printed the ironical words, 'All rights reserved.'

Browning laughed, and said it was a justifiable retaliation. I admitted this, but added that we did not call the English publishers 'pirates.' He conceded that the term was harsh, and that the English publishers deserved it as much as the American publishers.

Browning the mystical poet and Browning the man I discovered to be two distinct personages, and had I met him ignorant of who he was, I should have classed him as a thorough man of the world, free from sophistry, loving good company, and intent upon getting out of life all the pleasure, in its highest sense, that life affords.

Some years after our meeting in London, I was calling upon a lady in Venice, a countrywoman of mine, who kindly invited me to dinner. I begged off on the plea that my visit was a flying one, and that, not intending to accept any invitations, I had brought no evening dress with me. My hospitable friend said that would make no difference, as she expected only Mr. Browning and a few other intimate friends, and that she would write him 'to come as he was.' She showed me Browning's note in reply: 'Come as I am? I would come in my



nightdress rather than lose one of your delightful dinners.'

He came, not in the flowing drapery, but in a yellow mixed tweed suit, a blue-printed shirt-front, and a coloured necktie flying out sailor-fashion, looking more like a yachtsman on a day's outing than a classical poet whose originality and genius stood foremost in the ranks of modern poetical literature.

He was the life of the little dinner-party, monopolizing the conversation, and keeping us greatly amused with continuous personal anecdotes. I cannot recall any of these at this distance of time, but I remember an amusing incident he related connected with his friend and fellow-poet, Algernon Swinburne. He asked me if I had heard the report that Swinburne had been discovered one day sitting at his (Browning's) feet in the attitude of adoration. This report, greatly embellished, was current in literary circles, and originated in this way: Swinburne, during a morning's visit in Browning's library, had been striding up and down, during some argument between the two, and seeing a footstool in front of his companion's chair, sat down upon it, continuing his argument as he turned his face upward addressing Browning. At that moment a mutual friend dropped in, who, knowing Swinburne's intense admiration for Browning, drew the con-



clusion, from the attitude of the former, that he was worshipping at the feet of his great master. It was too good a joke to be kept quiet, and the friend lost no time in giving it the widest circulation. Browning enjoyed the report immensely, and was rather over-anxious to explain that it was 'all sheer nonsense, of course.'

I should say that poetical composition with Robert Browning was more the gratification of scholarly impulse than fervent passion, such as inspired Shelley and Keats. Years have passed since Browning's death, but they have not apparently modified the extreme views of the two parties, one of which declares that his poetry is 'a mass of conglomerate nonsense which nobody understands,' and the other that 'no other English poet, living or dead, Shakespeare included, has so heaped up human interest for his readers as Robert Browning.'

The lunch-party at Lord Houghton's, to which I have referred, was but one of innumerable entertainments which that distinguished man of letters was in the habit of giving to his wide and rather miscellaneous circle of personal friends. Probably no man of his time in England ever entertained at his hospitable table so many distinguished and undistinguished men in every department of literature, art, science, politics, religion, and the drama, as did



Houghton. It was his delight to assemble around him men of the most varied pursuits, and often those more or less antagonistic to each other, in order to bring about, under the congenial influences of the table, a reconciliation. His sister, Lady Galway, assured me that, opposed as she and her brother were in politics, which occasioned no little good-natured sparring between the two, never a word had affected their close and enduring mutual love from the time they were children till death parted them at a ripe old age, and that never did she hear from his lips a word of unkindness towards a human being. One of Houghton's verses, which he sent to our famous Metropolitan Fair, which was got up for the benefit of the sick and wounded soldiers during the civil war, fairly illustrates the noble sentiments of the distinguished poet.

‘ An arm to aid the weak,  
A friendly hand to the friendless ;  
Kind words, so short to speak,  
But whose echo is endless.  
The world is wide, these things are small ;  
They may be nothing, but they are all.’

His sister was very fond of ‘chaffing’ Houghton upon his indiscriminate selection of guests at his table, for she never knew whom she might meet at dinner or lunch, from a royal prince to an impoverished poet. She would call out to him across



the drawing-room, in a quizzical tone, as he entered with an unexpected guest :

‘Who have you brought home *now*, Houghton? Oh, it’s you, Lord X——, is it? Well, that’s a comfort, for one does like to know something about a person before one breaks bread with him.’

‘Do you remember, my dear,’ said Houghton at the table to his sister, ‘whether that famous scoundrel X——, who was tried in such a year, was hanged or acquitted?’

‘He must have been hanged,’ replied her ladyship, ‘or you would have had him to dinner long ago.’

Those of our countrymen who have visited Fryston Hall in Yorkshire—Lord Houghton’s country seat—must have pleasant remembrances of their charming host and hostess, and of the domestic attractions around them. It was the home of a literary man whose life was not all literature. The shelves of the library, when I was there, were insufficient to hold the large number of books he possessed, which overflowed and stood in piles along the corridor and lined the sides of the staircase. But Houghton was an encyclopædia in himself, and could discuss any subject that was suggested with the fluency of a ripe scholar. He possessed an infinite amount of humour, and was an adept at story-telling. Unfortunately the *bon mots* and anecdotes, which formerly were



considered as a sort of personal property by those who heard them 'over the walnuts and the wine,' to be retold only to the chosen few, are nowadays

'Caught by Paul Pry, and carried home to Polly,' who sends them forthwith to her beloved society newspaper, so that in quoting them one never knows whether they are fresh or stale. One of the stories he was fond of repeating, but which is now no longer a novelty, was the duel in a darkened room between an Englishman and a Frenchman. The former, not wishing to take the life of his opponent, fired his pistol up the chimney, and—brought down the Frenchman! 'Whenever I tell this story in France,' said Houghton, 'I put the *Englishman* up the chimney.'

When Houghton visited the United States in later years, it was not simple curiosity that called him there, but a keen feeling of interest in the progress and prosperity of the republic. On his return to England he said he was greatly amused at the odd questions put to him respecting American manners and social life, and that he had his hands full in attempting to correct the prevailing ignorance on the subject. 'Your country,' he remarked on one occasion to my wife, 'is like a woman of thirty, who is young enough to be interesting, and not old enough to regret her past.'



The last time I saw Houghton was a few months before his death. He and his sister, hearing that we were at San Remo on the Riviera, paid us a visit on their way to Italy. He was very much broken in health, and shocked me greatly by his physical appearance; but his mind was as clear as ever, and his conversation as brilliant and humorous as in his palmy days. On the day of their departure he insisted upon walking instead of driving with me to the railway-station. Leaning heavily on my arm, he entertained me along the way by reciting an unpublished poem, recently composed by him, in which he had ingeniously brought in all the names of the then living American men of letters. When he came to a good point, he would stop in his walk, squeeze my arm, and give me an inquiring look, as if saying: 'That's good, isn't it?' and it was, for an off-hand production, a very cleverly written little poem, which, if space permitted, I would be glad to introduce here.

I had not the honour of a personal acquaintance with Alfred Tennyson. The only opportunity which would have furnished me with an excuse for meeting him I neglected to avail myself of, knowing how distasteful it was to him to meet strangers where no absolute necessity required an interview. What I had to say to him, therefore, I communicated by



letter, and I received from him a most cordial and courteous letter in reply. But a relative of mine had once the pleasure of passing a day or two under the roof of the Laureate, and to his account of the visit I am indebted for the following glimpses of the poet's inner life, which are not likely to appear in the studied and stately memorials, written to illustrate the nobility of his character, while carefully concealing those personal weaknesses common to mankind, but which bring us nearer to the man himself, and humanize him to our view. 'Paint me as I am,' said Cromwell to the artist who was taking his portrait, and so we have the familiar mole upon his face, and know him all the better for it. Who would wish to part with the knowledge of Shakespeare's occasional carousals over the winecup with his boon companions, or the story of his deer-stealing; or wish to forget the blunt self-assertion, and the personal slovenliness, of Dr. Johnson? Their genius is not impaired by the knowledge that they were subject to human infirmities, or our interest in them lessened because their individual characteristics are not in keeping with the statuesque pose and godlike bearing which the biographer arrays as a just presentment of the subject he sets up for the admiration of his readers.

My cousin was a young man who possessed a good



deal of poetic sensibility, and had given proof of his talents as a versifier in a published volume of poems. He was an ardent admirer of Tennyson's poetry, and knew many of his poems by heart. So anxious was he to make the Laureate's personal acquaintance, that the American publisher of the poet's works strained a point in giving the enthusiastic young man a warm letter of introduction, which he believed would insure him a kindly reception. The letter was presented to Tennyson at his home in Freshwater, Isle of Wight, but the bearer was greatly disappointed at the cold, almost inhospitable, greeting which he at first received. Tennyson's manner was not uncivil, but it clearly indicated that the visitor was regarded by him as one of those innumerable bores who intrude upon the retirement of literary men for the sole purpose of gratifying a morbid and idle curiosity. My cousin felt that, under the circumstances, the shorter he made his visit the better, but he was determined to let Tennyson know that he was an ardent admirer of his poetry, and that he had come to see him as a pilgrim comes to a shrine where his heart and sympathies may find expression. He therefore, in a few words, thanked the great man for the privilege of meeting one who had so largely contributed to his intellectual enjoyment. Tennyson scanned the features of his guest, as if searching to



know how much sincerity there might be in his avowal, and, to test the matter, asked which of his poems he preferred, and what particular passages he chanced to remember. My cousin could not have desired a more gratifying question, and thereupon referred to his favourites and quoted line upon line, and then longer passages, with such unfeigned enthusiasm that it was evident the poet had before him a pure and unadulterated disciple.

Tennyson's manner and tone suddenly exhibited a magical transformation. His face relaxed its inquisitorial severity ; he settled himself in his chair, as if desirous of further acquaintance with the young American, and fell into a free and easy conversation on matters and things in general. When his guest rose to take leave, Tennyson would not listen to it, but insisted upon his remaining to dinner and passing the night. My cousin was only too delighted to accept both invitations, and he said, afterwards, that a more charming day in the way of intellectual enjoyment he had never experienced.

Some of Tennyson's personal peculiarities in the home circle amused, if they did not augment the reverence with which he had hitherto regarded the Laureate of England ; but they served to show the fibre—if in places rather coarse—of the downright honest Englishman. Tennyson's manners at dinner,



according to his guest's account, were somewhat uncouth, as he stood up over the roast, brandishing his carving-knife and calling out to know who would have more beef; but the geniality of hospitality gleamed in all he did. After dinner the poet armed himself with smoking-pipes and a bottle of spirits, and conducted his guest upstairs to his study, where he threw himself at full length upon the rug before the fire, and the two passed the evening, well into the night, discussing poetry—chiefly the Laureate's own poems—which he recited with sonorous unction, as if no greater compliment or source of enjoyment could be afforded to his companion than to supply him with unlimited draughts of poetic inspiration from the very fountain-head. Willis, the American poet, once remarked that the most exquisite pleasure an author can experience is to listen to his own compositions from the lips of a beautiful woman. Tennyson, I fancy, would have preferred to substitute himself for the beautiful woman, and to depend upon his own intonations.

If the young American parted from Tennyson with a most gratified sense of the master's generous entertainment, the latter seems to have appreciated the qualities of his guest, for, in the letter to me above referred to, he writes, after a lapse of very many years: 'I remember with great pleasure your cousin's



visits to me, and I am glad to find in yourself something of the interest in the old country which distinguished him.'

A friend of mine once narrated the incidents of a visit, in his company, of Tennyson to the castle of a certain distinguished nobleman. The poet had been invited for a specified day to meet other guests, but—presumably from the fact that he abhorred such assemblages—he failed to put in an appearance. When, some weeks after, he did turn up, he was not expected, and no guests were present; even her ladyship was absent on a distant visit. Under these circumstances the only thing his host could do was to request his private chaplain and my friend to assist him in entertaining the poet. The latter was well satisfied with this arrangement, and vastly preferred his independence to the bore of a circle of fashionable and inquisitive people. He made himself quite at home in the spacious castle, and went about smoking his pipe in the halls and rooms wherever he chanced to find himself. This habit greatly annoyed the noble proprietor, to whom, as well as his wife, tobacco smoke was so detestable that smoking in any form was forbidden within the walls. When Tennyson learned this, he was greatly discomfited, and would have left the castle rather than part from his beloved pipe. To accommodate matters, a room was pre-



pared for the poet at the very top of one of the towers, and there Tennyson and his two companions passed the evenings, if not, indeed, the entire nights, enveloped in clouds of tobacco smoke, he telling good stories, interspersed with recitations of poetry. This was rather hard in some respects upon the two companions, neither of whom was a smoker, and especially so upon the clergyman, who did not relish racy anecdotes, and who was accustomed to early hours. The chaplain's contortions of countenance during these nightly ordeals, said my informant, as the poor sufferer forced a smile, while inwardly discomforted by the jokes and the smoke, was something to see.

No critic of Tennyson can very well ignore the self-appreciation of the illustrious poet for his own productions. He valued highly his literary popularity, but personal flattery and snobbish adulation he despised. Going into the castle one day with my friend after a long and muddy walk, Tennyson kicked off his soiled overshoes in the hall, remarking with a sarcastic grin: 'The time was when I might have been taken to task for not wiping my shoes more carefully before coming in; but there are people nowadays who would, if they could, scrape off this mud and keep it as a souvenir.'

During the visit I am recording, Tennyson was



much interested in the fishermen of the little seaport near by, and would occasionally join them in their fishing expeditions at night, regardless of the weather, even when wet and boisterous. There, in the stern of the boat, sat the Laureate in his familiar black slouched hat, and his long black cloak about him, the rain pouring and the wind whistling through the darkness, whilst he recited his poems to the rough old fishermen, who, if they did not comprehend the wealth of the imagery or the refinement of the poetic treatment much more than did the fish gasping at the bottom of the boat, must have felt the pathos of the melody. The novelty of the entertainment they certainly appreciated, and, according to Tennyson, 'they were the best listeners he ever had.'

During his visit to the United States, I had the pleasure of passing three days with Mr. Matthew Arnold at the country seat of a mutual friend on the banks of the Hudson. I was glad to have an Englishman, endowed with poetical tastes and a love of Nature, see, under the auspices of a genial and hospitable host and hostess, one of the most attractive summer residences, so far as respects position, that we have to offer. It is a spacious mansion on elevated ground, and sufficiently removed from the banks of the noble river to afford an extensive view of the surrounding scenery. The autumn was at its



best, and the pleasing effects of an American 'Indian summer'—that soft and golden atmosphere, hazy yet distinct—illuminated the far spread of waters and the masses of crimson and yellow foliage which lined for miles the river's banks. 'I have seen nothing like it,' said Arnold, 'and I shall not easily forget it. As to these beautiful grounds, were it not that the lawn is grass instead of that velvety turf so highly prized by us at home, I should fancy myself in the park of an English nobleman.' Referring to an apartment in the house devoted to bric-à-brac and works of art, he pronounced it 'unequalled, unless, perhaps, in the collection of Baron Rothschild.' He never touched upon philosophy or letters, seemingly reserving those subjects for the lecture-room, his 'sweetness and light' on this occasion consisting in extracting pleasurable sensations from surrounding objects or the topics of the day. He criticised with some asperity certain English statesmen, leaving upon my mind the impression that he had personal grievances to complain of at their hands. With a satirical smile and a tone of commiseration, he could make a thrust, keen as a steel rapier, at the vulnerable point in the character of one whom he disliked, and then heal the wound by expatiating upon his good qualities.

Speaking of two English statesmen, I recall the relish with which he quoted the criticism passed



upon them by a certain famous Chancellor of a great empire—to wit: ‘As for Lord ——, he is a mere attorney; but the little Jew’ (Disraeli)—tapping his forehead—‘has got something in him.’ I was able to cap this anecdote with another instance of that audacious contempt for others, regardless of rank or position, which was characteristic of the same Chancellor. He, the Chancellor, was once relating to an American General—I had the story from headquarters—the difficulty he experienced, during a famous war, in overcoming the hesitation of the [then] King to advance the army across the frontier into the enemy’s country. Finally the Sovereign gave way, and authorized the Chancellor to convey, ‘on the following morning,’ to the officer in command the order to advance the troops. ‘I did not, however, wait till the morning to deliver the order,’ said the Chancellor to his friend, ‘but did so at once, *for fear the old fool would change his mind.*’

Matthew Arnold, for a public man, was unnecessarily sensitive to the newspaper reports of the American ‘interviewer,’ and he could not at all understand why respectable readers relished this dragging into publicity the private life and personal peculiarities of a visitor in their midst. He was also so greatly annoyed at the criticisms of some of the journals upon his lectures that he told me he



thought of discontinuing them. I assured him that what was termed his 'failure' as a lecturer referred to his imperfect manner of delivery, which prevented half the audience from hearing him with distinctness. As he was preparing at the time his lecture upon Emerson for delivery in Boston, I suggested that he should visit the lecture-room there beforehand, ascertain its acoustic conditions, and place a man at the far end of the room while he himself declaimed from the platform until his voice had become trained to reach the required distance. So simple an expedient, and one, I fancy, often resorted to by public speakers, had not occurred to him, and so great was his astonishment at the result that—as a relative of his in England subsequently informed me—Arnold mentioned in a letter to his family that he was indebted to me for the success of his lecture in Boston!

Like many men whose poetic sensibilities permeate the materiality of their lives, Matthew Arnold lost, if it was a loss, a keen relish for some of the sensuous pleasures of life, such, for instance, as an appreciative sense of the delights of the table. This does not seem to have been the opinion of a critic and personal friend of his, Mr. Augustine Birrell, who in a cleverly written review of Arnold's life, says: 'His judgments are human judgments. He did not care



for strange, out-of-the-way things ; he had no odd tastes. He drank wine, so he once said, because he liked it—good wine, that is.'

An amusing instance to the contrary came under my observation. Our admirable *Amphitryon*, during the country visit I have mentioned, introduced one day at dinner a rare and delicious claret especially for Arnold's benefit ; but the glass remained untouched before him until we were just about leaving the table, when our host, who was extremely sensitive in the matter of his wines, called his guest's attention to its merits. Thereupon the philosopher and poet looked down upon the cluster of wine-glasses before him, and taking up one filled with *maraschino*, sipped it with deliberation, and pronounced it 'a wonderful vintage.'

Arnold was more at home in the pursuit of the pleasures of Nature, and his delight was the cultivation of flowers. Even during his busy tour in the United States, writing and delivering lectures, and making notes of men and things, he found time to scour the hills and valleys for indigenous plants and shrubs. In a letter to me from Berkshire county, New England, he mentioned that he was botanizing with a relative of mine, and he carried home with him to England specimens of American flora which he transplanted to his garden



in Surrey. After his return home he wrote to me at Florence, where I reside: 'I have sometimes thought of ending my days in Florence, which I think the most beautiful place I know; but when it comes to uprooting myself from my cottage and garden here, I cannot do it.'

In an English magazine Arnold sums up his impressions of the United States thus: 'For an Englishman it is an—uninteresting—there, the word is out!—country to live in.' Notwithstanding this unfavourable verdict, he who could not uproot himself from his beloved English garden, allowed one of his choicest flowers—in the shape of a fair daughter—to be transplanted to American soil, there to be protected and fostered by an American husbandman.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

RECOLLECTIONS AND ANECDOTES OF ENGLISH  
CLERGYMEN.

THE 'Established Church' in England is a marvellous institution ; not so much for what it does in the saving of souls as from the fact that it is *established*. Anything established and maintained by Government is a potent magnet which attracts and holds fast the iron will of Conservative Englishmen. The why or wherefore is a question never raised ; the fact is accepted by the adherents of the Church though it should override religion itself. I heard an old Conservative, who had been impatiently listening to the argument of a Dissenter against Church doctrine, put an end to the discussion by bringing his fist down upon the table with a tremendous bang, as he exclaimed : ' Sir, it matters not whether the doctrines of the Church of England are sound or unsound : they are *established*, and that is enough for me.'



And it is enough for a very large body of very devout worshippers. But there are other large bodies of very devout worshippers who hold the opinion that the Church of England is a ponderous pile of incongruous architecture, obtruding upon the thoroughfare, impeding the progress of advanced thought, and shutting out the light of heaven—that is, if heaven ignores dogmas, tenets, creeds, and the Thirty-nine Articles.

For myself, I had always felt a great respect for the outward and visible side of the Church of England, because of the stateliness of that institution, its enormous revenues, its vast patronage, and the dignified administration of its sacerdotal offices. Judge therefore of my surprise at the discovery that, after all, it is but a house of cards, which a good strong wind from the right direction would scatter and ‘shrivel up’ like dead leaves! My authority for this astounding assertion is no less a personage than the late Canon Liddon of St. Paul’s—whose statements on matters of fact cannot for a moment be questioned. Speaking at the Pusey memorial meeting, soon after the death of that distinguished divine, Canon Liddon said: ‘To quote another name, Mr. Keble, there was a time when more than any other man Pusey held in his hands, humanly speaking, the fortunes of the



English Church. (Cheers.) In the sad autumn of 1845, when we lost the genius whom the world knew as Cardinal Newman, when men's hearts were failing and *everyone was suspected*, Dr. Pusey stood firm. (Cheers.) Had it been otherwise, had he yielded to the pressure and panic of the time, the Church of Rome would have occupied a very different position in this country from that which she does at this moment, while the Church of England would too probably have *shrivelled up* into something very like a narrow Puritan sect. (Cheers.)'

No wonder there should have been a memorial meeting for such a man. The only wonder is that memorial windows have not been erected in all the church buildings of the land, representing Dr. Pusey 'standing firm' amidst the 'failing hearts' around him, upholding the walls of the 'Established' Church as they trembled to their fall.

I have met casually several distinguished clergymen of both the Established and Dissenting churches, and have found them, socially, to be among the most delightful of conversationalists. Especially has this been the case when my clerical companion has been alone with me in a railway-carriage, on shipboard, or at a foreign hotel, where, freed, for the time being, from the restraints of professional conventionality,



he has betrayed the mundane side of his character, expanded into mirth, and proved that, as Sam Slick puts it, there was 'a good deal of human nater in the man, arter all.'

My first specimen of an English clergyman left upon my mind such an agreeable impression of geniality and unaffected kindness, although I was an entire stranger to him, that it very likely gave a colour to my subsequent opinion of the whole class. This was many years ago, when, as a young and inexperienced traveller, I was visiting London for the first time. He was a tall, distinguished-looking man, with marked features and a most benevolent expression of countenance, and wore a stiff, clerical hat, leggings, and shoe-buckles. He was standing beside me in front of the cage of monkeys at the Zoological Gardens, when a most amusing scene occurred. What we saw was this: In the midst of the antics going on in the cage, or, rather, large compartment filled with monkeys of all sorts and sizes, one little fellow sat on his tree at the extremity of the cage casting his eyes about, apparently intent on mischief. Suddenly he sprang to the ground, and, stealthily creeping along the back of the cage, so as to escape observation, approached, from behind, a big, old-fashioned-looking ape, who, like a grave judge absorbed in meditation, sat immovable, and



apparently unconscious of what was going on about him, on a high post at that end of the cage. Watching his opportunity, the little monkey glided up the post and pulled the big one's tail. In a second he was back again at the spot he had left, securing his retreat by following the same course as before, and, gliding up the tree, sat there looking into vacancy, the picture of conscious innocence. Old Judge, who had no idea of allowing the act of indignity put upon him to pass unpunished, took his time about it. Moving his great clumsy body slowly round so as to survey the entire cage, he carefully examined the face of each monkey in turn to ascertain, by its expression, which among them was the culprit. This investigation lasted several minutes, when finally, by some intuitive process of mind, he seemed to have decided that the little innocent-looking fellow on the far-off tree was the one who was 'wanted.' Thereupon, with a succession of tremendous leaps over monkeys and under monkeys, the big beast reached the tree where sat the offender, mounted it, and, before the latter had a chance to escape, seized him by the nape of the neck and cuffed his ears. Having thus passed sentence and executed it at the same time, Old Judge descended the tree, and, walking solemnly back to his post, resumed his attitude of dignified repose.



‘Wonderful! wonderful!’ said the clergyman at my side, turning towards me; ‘almost human, is it not?’ Then, encouraged by my interest in the proceedings, he enlarged upon the traits and characteristics of the monkey, giving many details which were new to me. As he conversed, we passed on together to the adjoining room, where some specimens of snakes attracted his attention, upon which he again discoursed, giving me a good deal of information in a familiar, unobtrusive way that surprised and charmed me. Still conversing, we passed out of the building and down the broad garden walk, at the end of which I parted from my affable companion, with thanks for his entertaining conversation.

‘Who is that clergyman?’ I asked of a man in livery, a guide or superintendent of the garden, who, at a little distance off, had been profusely bowing to the reverend gentleman as he passed on his way. The man looked at me as if I were hoaxing him.

‘You do not know, sir? Why, I thought I seed you a-walkin’ and a-talkin’ with his Grace.’

‘His Grace? Then he is a bishop, I suppose. I ought to have known as much from the cord on his hat.’

‘That gentleman, sir, with whom you’ve ben a-walkin’ and a-talkin’ is his Grace’—here the man stepped back the better to observe the effect upon



me of the information he was about to impart—‘the Harchbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all Hingland!’ (Dr. Sumner).\*

Some fifteen years after this little incident, when temporarily residing in London, I had an opportunity of comparing the personal characteristics of my chance acquaintance of the Zoological Garden with the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Tait. As, accompanied by my wife, I drove from the whirl and roar of the London streets through the archway and into the spacious court of Lambeth Palace, the profound silence, coupled with the ecclesiastical solemnity of the surroundings, was most impressive. The interior of this historical structure—which has been the official residence of the Archbishops of Canterbury for several centuries—is in keeping with

\* It struck me afterwards as somewhat remarkable that it chanced to be in front of the *monkeys’* cage that I met this distinguished prelate, and that he should have exclaimed, after witnessing the scene between these intelligent animals: ‘Almost human, is it not?’ for it was he, Dr. Sumner, who wrote in his ‘Records of Creation’ the following passage, in controversion of the Darwinian theory: ‘In order to warrant the pretended analogy between the highest brute animal and the lowest savage, it ought to be also true that this lowest savage is no more capable of improvement than the chimpanzee or orang-outang.’ Perchance the Archbishop of Canterbury, when I met him, was purposely there to investigate the ‘pretended analogy.’ If so, he must have become more or less Darwinized by the human traits of Old Judge and the little monkey.



its external grandeur, and although the rooms in which we were received by the genial host and hostess were filled with a gay and fashionable company, the influence of the surroundings, rather than the presence of the Archbishop, produced a subduing effect perceptibly in contrast with the airy indifference which characterizes usual society gatherings. His Grace, but for his clerical dress, might have passed for one of the guests, so free was he from the slightest appearance of that dignified condescension from which a less sensible man, holding 'pre-eminent authority over the whole kingdom,' could not readily have divested himself. As he passed from guest to guest, welcoming the new arrivals and taking leave of those who were departing, I had little opportunity of conversing with him; but on a later occasion, at a garden-party at Addington Park—the summer residence of his Grace—he was good enough to give us a considerable share of his attention, owing, probably, to the fact that we were the only foreigners present among the invited guests. It was a lovely afternoon in summer, and the beautiful grounds, green lawn, and tastefully laid-out flower-beds tempted the brilliant company to wander about, or be seated at will, and find amusement for themselves. The Archbishop took us all over the grounds, and seemed to experience a genuine



pleasure in showing the place, including the mansion, through which he conducted us from kitchen to bedrooms. When we took our leave, both he and Mrs. Tait accompanied us to the gate of the park, where, perceiving that one of our children, a young lad, was seated in the carriage—where we had left him during our visit—his Grace expressed his surprise that we had not brought him with us into the grounds to enjoy the festivities. Thereupon he took the lad out, and, insisting upon our return to the garden, led him back and treated the youngster to cakes and wine, to his great contentment. This gracious little act served to illustrate one of the characteristics of that excellent man, namely, his love for and genuine sympathy with children. For many years headmaster of Rugby College, Dr. Tait had established a reputation as an admirable disciplinarian, tempered by justice and embellished by an ardent affection for the pupils under his charge. He felt a personal interest in each, and, with rare discrimination, adapted himself to their individual traits of character. Probably his appointment to the elevated position he subsequently held was traceable in large measure to his admirable qualities as a teacher and supervisor of English youth.

It must require a good deal of tact and a careful investigation of personal character to select from



among the higher clergy a suitable archbishop, who, without exciting jealousy or disappointment among his brethren of the clergy, shall fitly fill the place of shepherd over so vast and various a flock of Church religionists. He must be able, without that striking professional ability which provokes criticism. He must be liberal, without wounding the sensitiveness of the extreme doctrinaire, or seeming to play into the hands of the ultra-reformist. He must be mild without weakness, and strong without dogmatism. He must be wise in his generation, and possess an aptitude for reconciling opposing interests. In a word, 'the elements should so mix in him' that the votaries of the Established Church can 'stand up and say to all the world'—*This is an archbishop!* I thought Dr. Tait came as near to these requirements as could well be found in the Church of England.\*

Dr. Thomson, Archbishop of York, who died recently, apart from his commanding position, was noted for remarkable intellectual abilities. Several

\* As a model of terseness, without eulogistic extravagance, the tablet on the wall of Canterbury Cathedral, in memory of Dr. Tait, may be read with interest: 'A great archbishop, just, discerning, dignified, a statesman wise to know the time and resolute to redeem it, he had one aim—to make the Church of England more and more the Church of the people, drawing towards it, both by word and good example, all who love things true, pure, beautiful, and of good report.' This epitaph was composed by the Dean of Llandaff.



years ago, having a letter of introduction to Mrs. Thomson from a relative of hers residing abroad, I and my wife received a cordial invitation to visit them at Bishopsthorpe, a few miles from the old cathedral town of York. We found there a small party of guests, and our stay of a few days was extremely interesting.

Dr. Thomson presented a strong contrast, both physically and intellectually, to Dr. Tait. He was a tall, stout man, with a remarkable head, and, in his canonicals, altogether most imposing. When, as a young man residing at Oxford, he fell in love with, and married, Miss Zoe Skeen—the daughter of a Scotch father and a Greek mother—they were universally pronounced to be the handsomest couple that Oxford had seen for many a day. As Archbishop, Dr. Thomson was held in very high regard, but a certain pomposity of manner—which was manner only—excited criticism in certain quarters, where his true merit as an earnest, hard-working, and devoted servant of the Church was not thoroughly understood. He certainly lacked that appearance of the ‘gentle shepherd’ which is regarded as a pre-eminent qualification in his high calling; but to those who knew him personally, his warm heart and truly benevolent disposition were among the most prominent traits of his character. During my visit



at Bishopsthorpe, I had occasion to observe his faithful devotion to the requirements of the diocese, and the uninterrupted claims upon his time and attention. Between his clerical correspondence, sermon-writing, consultations with the clergy, and parish visitings, I wondered how he found time to entertain the guests so frequently assembled under his hospitable roof. Yet he managed, on more than one occasion, to join us in our walks in the neighbourhood, during which his conversation, on any subject which came up, was in the highest degree instructive and entertaining. Worldly, in one sense, he was, as he took a keen interest in passing events, but this only made his society the more interesting. I was amused to find that he was not exempt from that darling idiosyncrasy of all Englishmen—the appreciation of rank and position. Taking me one day over the house, he was especially interested in showing me the bedroom occupied by the Prince of Wales when visiting Bishopsthorpe, which, he assured me, had not been disturbed in any of its arrangements since H.R.H. had honoured it with his presence.

It was at the dinner-table—or, rather, after the ladies had withdrawn, and when his Grace pushed back his chair from the table and crossed his purple legs to compose himself for free-and-easy conversation—that I thought him at his best. It was the hour



when, relieved from official restraint and the daily weight and annoyances of clerical life, he unbent for social intercourse and discussed matters having no possible relation to his particular calling, and frequently enlivened the chit-chat with pertinent and amusing anecdotes.

The Archbishop asked me one day, when we were alone, about the social habits of the American clergy at home, and explained his motive for putting the question by narrating the following incident: He once received a letter from an American bishop, then travelling in England, enclosing an introduction in behalf of himself and another bishop who were visiting Europe in company. They were both from a remote Western State. The Archbishop responded at once by letter to the address given, and invited them to visit him at York, requesting his correspondents to reply if the day appointed would suit their convenience, and if not, to name the day when he might expect them. To this letter no answer was received. Several weeks, if not, indeed, months, passed without a word from the travellers, and the Archbishop, concluding that his own or the others' letter had miscarried, dismissed the matter from his mind. One day the servant announced to his Grace that two travellers, each carrying a hand-bag and covered with dust, were waiting in the hall.



They proved to be the two American bishops, who thus presented themselves, *sans façon*, in acknowledgment of their host's invitation. The only explanation offered for this sudden and unlooked-for appearance was that they thought 'any time' would do for their visit, and so postponed it until their return journey through England made it more convenient to take York on their way. Unfortunately, the house was full of visitors at the time, and it was only by putting the members of the family to personal inconvenience that rooms were provided for the two unexpected guests. With the exception of having the dust removed from their travelling costumes, they appeared at dinner, during the days of their stay at Bishopsthorpe, in the same clothes in which they arrived.

It is only by obtaining a personal glimpse of the interior lives and occupations of the highest class of English clericals that one perceives how grave a mistake it is to assume that the mitre, the pomp, the power, and the enormous salaries, which accompany such positions, are unmixed honours or blessings. So far as my observations went, the two archbishops of England not only felt acutely the vast responsibility of their office, but were among the hardest workers in the land. The demands upon their time, patience, and purse, are beyond calculation, and it



often happens that, so far as pecuniary matters are concerned, the higher the prelate the poorer are the means at his disposal. The late Archbishop of York was no exception to this rule, and on one occasion he lamented to me his inability to visit the United States—a thing he greatly desired to do—because of the expense. One item alone, he thought, would prevent it, namely, the extra premium he would be called upon to pay on his life-assurance policy.

Dr. Thomson owed his elevation to Prince Albert, on whom, and the Queen, his imposing appearance and eloquent preaching had made an impression. He was not, however, the only candidate in the field, as appears in a letter from the late Lord Houghton to his wife, published in his memoirs. Houghton writes: 'The Dean of Windsor told us that the sharpest bishop-making the Queen ever had was when she rejected Waldegrave for York, and Lord Palmerston told her she knew nothing about it, and she answered, "No more do you," and she named your Ebor.'

There is an amusing story in this connection which, as coming from Mrs. Thomson herself, is worth repeating, even if it has already appeared in print. When Dr. Thomson was Bishop of Gloucester, he was occasionally a sufferer from toothache, and resorted, by medical advice, to narcotics to relieve



the pain. One morning, after a night of great suffering, he left the house to consult the doctor, Mrs. Thomson entreating him not to allow the latter to prescribe a narcotic, as it affected his brain for some hours afterwards. On his way the Bishop met the postman, who handed him a large official envelope. He opened it in the street, and read, to his surprise and gratification, his appointment to the See of York. He hastened back to communicate to his wife the exciting news.

‘Zoe, Zoe,’ he exclaimed, ‘what do you think has happened? I am Archbishop of York!’

‘There, there!’ she rejoined, ‘what did I tell you? You’ve been taking that horrid narcotic again, and are quite out of your head.’

At a luncheon-party in London, the guests had been for some time in the drawing-room before going in to table, when the host said to me: ‘We are waiting for the Bishop of Winchester [Wilberforce], but if he does not appear soon, we will go in without him.’ At last the Bishop was announced. He entered the room with a hurried, nervous air, as if somewhat agitated.

‘You are late, Bishop,’ said our host, Earl G——.

‘*Late!*’ exclaimed the Bishop. ‘The wonder is that I am here at all.’

At this we gathered about him to hear what had



happened. He said that he had come on foot, and that when about to cross Pall Mall a hansom cab, with two men in it, attempted to run him over. He firmly believed it was the intention of the two occupants to take his life in this way. Then, starting back as if greatly surprised, he pointed at two of the guests—very distinguished men, who were personal friends of his—and exclaimed: ‘I declare, if there are not the very two chaps!’ Upon this there was a general laugh, the company perceiving that the Bishop was only indulging in one of his habitual jokes. ‘It’s a great shame,’ continued Wilberforce, with assumed gravity, ‘that, whilst the proud man drives, the poor man who has to go on foot cannot be allowed to do so in safety.’

At table, being at some distance from the Bishop, I heard none of his conversation, and cannot say if he continued in the humorous strain with which he joined the party; but while some effervescing water was being passed round, after we returned to the drawing-room, he seized a bottle of soda-water, and, bringing it to me, asked if I knew how to open it, declaring that it was an *art*, and one to which he had devoted much time and attention—in fact, it was a speciality of his, as he would proceed to show. Then he withdrew the cork with considerable skill, and filled my glass. This humoristic quality



in his composition, which sometimes degenerated into flippancy, somewhat impaired his reputation as a high ecclesiastic ; but, like many men of jocose aptitudes, Wilberforce was not infrequently the prey to terrible depression of spirits, not traceable to any apparent cause, for no man in the Church occupied a more enviable position as regards popularity, or stood higher as a powerful and effective pulpit orator. But for this defect—if such it was—as a clergyman, Bishop Wilberforce would, in the opinion of many Churchmen, have stood foremost as a candidate for the archbishopric at the first vacancy that occurred.

In personal appearance the Bishop was not imposing, being under the average height. His face was intellectual, and did not indicate the keen sense of humour he possessed. This quality he seemed to keep in abeyance for appropriate occasions. Of the many sayings attributed to him I remember the following : On being asked, during a moral discussion, what he considered the best way to heaven, he replied : ‘ Turn to the right, and keep straight on.’

While on a visit to a country house a carriage-party was made up for a drive, and the Bishop was urged to join it ; but he insisted on walking, and started off on foot by himself. On the road the carriage-party passed him as he was trudging along,



and one of the company shouted out to him, quoting from Watts's hymn :

‘ How blest is he who ne’er consents  
By ill advice to *walk* !’

To whom the Bishop shouted back, completing the stanza :

‘ Nor stands in sinners’ ways, nor *sits*  
Where men profanely talk.’

I used occasionally to see the Bishop at the Athenæum Club, and I well remember the last occasion on which we met, for it was a memorable day—Saturday, July 19, 1873. It was about three o’clock in the afternoon when he looked into the reading-room, and, seeing no other acquaintance present, sat down in a chair next to me and indulged in desultory conversation. ‘How are you? How are you getting on?’ were his first words, which are impressed upon my memory in view of subsequent events connected with his own ‘getting on.’ After a quarter of an hour’s chit-chat, the Bishop looked at his watch, and exclaimed that he had no idea it was so late, and that he must ‘be off,’ as he had an engagement in the country. From the club he walked to his own house near by, took up his hand-bag lying in the hall, called a cab, and drove to the railway-station. In the train he was joined by Lord Granville. The two gentlemen descended



at one of the stations, where they took saddle-horses for Leatherhead. It would seem as if during that ride the Bishop exhibited all the characteristics of his versatile mind, for Granville wrote: 'We talked almost incessantly on political, social, and religious subjects, the Bishop telling one of his amusing stories. Shortly after this,' continues Granville, 'we broke into a gentle canter over a smooth stretch of turf. I was riding on the Bishop's left, slightly in advance. I heard a thud on the ground, and saw him lying motionless. The horse, probably a little tired, had put his foot in a gutter of turf, and stumbled without coming down. The Bishop must have turned a complete summersault; his feet were in the direction in which we were going, his arms straight by his side. The position of the dead man was absolutely monumental.'

Thus perished one of the shining lights of the Church of England, a man who was declared to be 'the undisputed leader among English bishops.' The news of his death threw all London—indeed, all England—into sudden and profound grief. As I was probably the last person of his acquaintance with whom he conversed in London, and that only within an hour or two of his untimely death, the impression left upon my mind will never pass away.

On the Sunday week following this sad event I



and my wife chanced to be the guests of Dean Smith at Canterbury, the well-known Oriental scholar, whose charming residence was in the cathedral close, and who knew the grand old structure by heart. He had taken us over it on the preceding day, pointing out and dilating upon every foot and corner of historic interest. On Sunday afternoon the Dean preached to a full church an affecting sermon on the death of the Bishop of Winchester. As the congregation passed out, the beautiful strains of the Dead March from 'Saul' rolled and echoed down the pillared nave of the vast cathedral with sublime effect.

To pass from the august surroundings of the Church of England to the simple and almost unobserved worship of the Dissenter seems a very wide stride, but in a city of such varied phases as London it is in reality but a step. A cynical Churchman once summed up to me the distinction between the congregations at the Established churches, and those at the Dissenting places of worship, by remarking that 'the former are gentlemen and ladies, don't you know, and the latter are not.' In more becoming language, he might have said that a majority of the upper classes in England are adherents of the Established Church; but this fact is a very weak argument in favour of a spiritual form of faith, and



especially at a period when the social demarcations between the classes are gradually, but significantly, giving way.

I have always entertained a high regard for those who have the courage of their own opinions—whatever those opinions may be—in religious matters, and especially for those who have the still greater courage to throw off shackles they can no longer conscientiously bear, and stand up manfully in defence of the principles they have espoused. This feeling has induced me to visit from time to time some of the Dissenting chapels of London.

One Sunday I attended the Theistic services, at St. George's Hall, of the Rev. Charles Voysey, whose influence, although limited to a small congregation, is an influence for good. Formerly a preacher of the Church of England, Voysey was inhibited chiefly through the instrumentality of the Archbishop of York, and after trial by the bench of bishops was declared to be guilty of 'erroneous doctrine.' The case created some excitement at the time, and the subscription by the friends of Voysey to the 'defence fund' showed an undertone of theological sympathy for him which had not been supposed to exist. On the Sunday when I was present, the discourse dwelt upon the alarming increase of dishonest practices in commercial transactions, and, among other in-



stances, the preacher alluded to the adulteration of American products, and the weighting of cotton bales with scrap-iron previous to their shipment to Liverpool. Some instances of this fraud had lately come to light, but I believed these to be exceptional, and that the sweeping assertion of general dishonesty reflected most unfairly upon a large and respectable body of my countrymen. This I stated in a letter I addressed to him on the following day, and as each sermon was subsequently printed for general distribution, I begged that the statement from the pulpit might be corrected before printing. Mr. Voysey promptly replied, expressing his regret for the charge he had made under a misapprehension of the facts, and promised to make the necessary corrections. When this was done I thought it proper to thank Mr. Voysey in person, and found him to be a most agreeable and intelligent gentleman.

On passing out of Mr. Voysey's chapel on the Sunday referred to, I found myself walking side by side with Sir Charles Lyell, the celebrated geologist.

‘*You* here, Sir Charles!’ I exclaimed.

‘Yes,’ he replied; ‘I think this about as near to the truth as any place in London.’

The Rev. Stopford Brooke is another independent clergyman, but of a different stamp. When I first met him at the house of his friend and parishioner,



Mr. Russell Sturgis, he was one of the 'Queen's chaplains,' and was filling St. James's Chapel with the admirers of his pure and graceful oratory. In the course of conversation I expressed my regret that I could not obtain a pew for my family in the body of his church. He said, with a smile, that before long there would be no difficulty in obtaining one, for, not being liberal enough for one Prime Minister and too liberal for another Prime Minister (naming them), he expected, between the two stools, to come to the ground. And soon afterwards this occurred, or, rather, he descended gracefully, of his own accord, from a position which had gradually become irksome to him by the growth of his independent thought. Then he established a church of his own, where he could enunciate his theological views—Unitarian—without conscientious scruples. He told me one day, as he sat smoking a briar pipe in his library—a charming room adorned with rare prints, choice books, and his beloved poets—that he had gained, in point of numbers, as many members for his new church as he had lost from the old one. Since then, I believe, the increase of membership has been large.

I will now introduce an English clergyman of an equally distinct class, the Rev. Charles Spurgeon, whose acquaintance I made in the smoking-room of



a hotel on the Italian Riviera, where we met regularly after dinner for a succession of weeks. Sometimes we were alone together, at other times the company of smokers was enlarged; but in either case Spurgeon confined himself to his one cigar per day, and, when it was consumed, retired to his own rooms for study or for work, never reappearing except at the *table-d'hôte* meals. When alone with me his conversation was chiefly confined to the religious work he was engaged in; his London Tabernacle, with its five or six thousand worshippers; his college for clergymen, or his orphanage, both of which he founded; his books and other writings; or the details of his clerical life.

When Spurgeon and I were joined by other gentlemen in the smoking-room, he dropped his personal affairs and joined in whatever subject came up. But I never knew an evening to pass without at least one good anecdote from his immense *répertoire*.

I heard him preach but once, and that was in London, but not in his own tabernacle. There was nothing especially quaint in his delivery, but he was of course original.

Toward the close of his sermon he said he had a letter to read to the congregation, and produced it from his pocket. It was from an English lad who had found employment on a farm in one of the



Western States of America, but of whom he had never heard before the receipt of the letter. In it the lad said he felt bound to write to Mr. Spurgeon and thank him for having 'saved his soul.' This had occurred, the writer went on to say, when Mr. Spurgeon addressed him in the sermon *personally*; and he could not sufficiently express his sense of obligation. He was happy, doing well on the farm, and so forth. Spurgeon remarked that the sermon referred to must have been one in which he had called upon the young men and young women present as 'You, John; you, Tom; you, Bill; you, Mary—Jane—Susan,' and so on, to abandon whatever vices they had, and to embrace religion. The 'Tom' who wrote this letter, supposing himself to be individually addressed, had taken the matter seriously to heart. Spurgeon was glad that he had done so.

Spurgeon told me that many individuals remembered him personally whom he had forgotten. Thus, on one occasion, a man stepped forward as he was passing out of church, announced his name, and grasped the preacher fervently by the hand.

'I see,' said he, 'that you have forgotten me, sir; and yet you once did me the greatest service that a clergyman can render to anybody.'

'What service was that?' said Spurgeon.



‘ You buried my wife, sir,’ replied the man, his eyes suffused with tears.

He once asked me to be a witness to the fact of his abstemiousness in the use of tobacco, in case I should be in a position to deny the statement made in an American newspaper that he was ‘killing himself’ by excessive smoking. Apropos to this subject is the following incident: On one occasion an American clergyman, who had brought a letter of introduction to Spurgeon, was invited by him to preach in his pulpit. The reverend gentleman took for his subject the small vices to which humanity is prone, and enumerated among others the use of tobacco in any form. The sermon concluded, Spurgeon rose and expressed his thanks to his colleague for his very edifying address, but he begged the congregation to understand that he disagreed entirely with his friend respecting cigar-smoking. It was not the moderate use, but the abuse of smoking, which entitled it to be ranked among the small ‘vices.’ As for himself, he derived no little satisfaction and comfort from his one daily cigar, especially after a hard day’s clerical work, and he intended that very night before he went to bed ‘to have a good smoke.’ He then pronounced the benediction.

Spurgeon told me that many of the stories about him in the newspapers were pure inventions, and he



cited the one so familiar to everybody, that, to illustrate backsliding, he slid down backwards on the stair-rails of his pulpit. 'I could give you a hundred reasons,' he continued, 'to prove the falsity of the charge; but I will only give you one, namely, that there are no stair-rails to my pulpit.'

Spurgeon's appreciation of humour was so great that it frequently asserted itself on the most solemn occasions. One of the deacons of his church—a gentleman, by the way, whom he introduced to me as his 'Turkish deacon,' because the first letters of his name were *Ala*—told me that sometimes in his sermons Spurgeon would find himself on the verge of indulging in a humorous illustration, and checked himself just in time to prevent a general explosion of laughter.

Among the many good stories which Spurgeon told me under the genial influences of his 'one cigar per diem,' the following may be new to the reader:

He, or one of his friends, I forget which, was invited to a country house where a large number of guests were assembled. Arriving late, and after all the other bedrooms were disposed of, his hostess was obliged to put him in a large old-fashioned chamber, seldom occupied, and concerning which there seemed to be a good deal of mystery. On the following morning she expressed great anxiety to hear how he



had passed the night. The guest assured her that he had seldom slept better.

‘I am so glad,’ remarked the lady. ‘Then you had no disturbances? You received no—er—*visitations*? The truth is, I had to put you in the “haunted chamber,” and I have been very nervous about it all night.’

‘Well, madam, now you speak of it, I *did* have a visitation,’ he replied. ‘About midnight I awoke and discovered a veiled female standing motionless by my bedside. As she seemed to have nothing particular to communicate, I availed myself of the opportunity to appeal to her benevolence—a habit I have when in the presence of ladies—so reaching under my pillow for a little book which I always carry about with me, I asked her to do me the favour to subscribe to my orphanage. Upon this she disappeared like a shot, and I never saw anything more of her!’

A lady friend had asked me to get Spurgeon to repeat to me his favourite story of ‘St. Peter and the Sinner.’ He told it somewhat in this wise: A very depraved man, but possessing a most attractive countenance, appealed to St. Peter at the golden gate for admission. He confessed that he had been guilty of many sins, and that he could not recall to mind a single virtuous act in mitigation thereof.



Still, he ventured to hope for mercy and forgiveness.

‘But surely you have done *something* good during your life?’ said the keeper of the keys, who was forcibly struck by the personal beauty of the delinquent, and was anxious to admit him.

‘I don’t believe I ever have, your Holiness,’ he replied.

‘But search your memory,’ said St. Peter; ‘for I cannot admit you without some valid reason for doing so. Have you never given anything to the poor? Have you never belonged to the Society of St. Joseph, for instance?’

‘Never, your Holiness.’

‘Then I must refuse you. But stay. Were you a *married* man down below?’

‘I was, your Holiness.’

‘Oh, well, that quite alters the case. If you were married, you have done penance enough. Enter in, poor suffering soul, and take your well-earned rest.’

Another sinner, who had overheard the conversation, and who had just been refused admission, now eagerly advanced to St. Peter and declared that he, too, had been married, when a sinner upon earth, and he therefore prayed that his case might be reconsidered.



‘Are you quite sure,’ said St. Peter, ‘that you were a married man?’

‘Quite sure, your Holiness;’ and to make his appeal more effective, he added: ‘I was twice married, your Holiness.’

‘*Twice* married! *twice* married!’ exclaimed the keeper of the keys in a voice of indignation. ‘Be off with you! *Fools* are not admitted here.’

Spurgeon’s professed belief in the efficacy of prayer amounted to a superstition. As I never had any discussion with him on theological matters, I do not know how he accounted for those dispensations of Providence which are in direct opposition to the fervent appeals made to the Mercy-seat. He gave me on one occasion in the smoking-room an interesting account of the financial difficulties which frequently occurred during the erection of his famous tabernacle in London. The deacons of the church, he informed me, were all men of means, a point always considered in their selection, as they controlled the finances, and were therefore not exposed to temptations in the management of the large sums which passed through their hands. They were liberal also in making advances from their private means when the necessity arose for so doing; but before the building of the tabernacle was completed, this aid was found to be insufficient, and promissory



notes against loans had frequently to be resorted to. On one occasion, much to the dismay of the finance committee, a note of hand for a considerable sum was about to fall due, to meet which no funds had been provided, nor did the committee know where to turn to obtain the money. A meeting of the committee, at which the pastor was present, was held, but the discussion led to no result. This was on a Saturday, and the note was due at the bank on the following Monday. A great disgrace stared them in the face, for to allow such a note, given for a religious object, to go to protest would, in a moral point of view, be a mortification and a scandal.

‘The meeting,’ said Spurgeon, ‘was about to adjourn, without having accomplished anything, when I said: “Brethren, let us ask God for the money.”’ Spurgeon’s tone and manner in making this proposition were such as an ordinary business man would have said to a board of directors, ‘Gentlemen, let us ask the Bank of England for the money.’ Thereupon the pastor and his committee fell upon their knees and supplicated the Almighty for aid in this their hour of need. Spurgeon repeated to me the substance of the prayer, which seems to have been given in a conversational style, and in order to convey precise information respecting the condition of the



finances, and the need of money without any unnecessary delay.

The meeting then adjourned, everyone feeling more or less assured that through the Divine agency the note at the bank would be honoured on the day it fell due. But Saturday and Sunday passed without hope being discerned in any quarter, and the fatal Monday arrived, leaving things as they were. During the morning of that day, when the shadows of the awful 'protest' seemed to be gathering about him, Spurgeon was interrupted in his library by the entrance of a gentleman—a total stranger to him—who, without mentioning his name, proceeded to explain the object of his visit. He had understood, so the stranger informed him, that a note was falling due that day for which no funds had been provided, and that the note was for money borrowed for the erection of the tabernacle. The stranger was not a member of Mr. Spurgeon's congregation, he stated, but he had always felt interested in the pastor and the noble work in which he was engaged. Might he be allowed to contribute, as a donation towards the erection of the tabernacle, the sum required, and so avert the consequences of a protest? Mr. Spurgeon assenting, the other produced his pocket-book, and taking out the exact sum in bank-notes, placed them on the table, raised his hat, and disappeared from



the room. Since then no clue as to who the gentleman was had been obtained.

‘I was sure,’ continued Spurgeon, ‘that God would answer our prayer, and, as you see, He did. I purposely refrained from expressing any surprise or special feeling of gratitude to the donor. It was God’s work, for His own tabernacle; *we* were but simple agents in His hands.’ I doubt if it ever entered into Spurgeon’s mind that the benevolent donor had probably had the matter brought to his attention by some member of the committee or member of the congregation, and, not wishing for notoriety, adopted this roundabout mode of exercising his benevolent inclinations.

Spurgeon told me that some years ago, during the discussion on Disestablishment, which disturbed the Church party as much as it gratified the Dissenters, he and Dean Stanley met in the street.

‘Well, Spurgeon,’ said the Dean, ‘which are you going to take—Westminster Abbey or St. Paul’s? I would advise you to take the Abbey, and leave St. Paul’s to Manning; there is so much more space in the latter for processions.’

Not only the liberal-minded Dean Stanley, but all grades of the English clergy, with few exceptions, as well as prominent statesmen and men of professional and literary eminence, sympathized with Spurgeon



in his disinterested work in the peculiar field of labour to which he devoted his life. When during his last illness men of all shades of opinion and position, from the Archbishop of Canterbury downwards, called in person to leave their cards of inquiry at his house, we may feel well assured that bigotry in England is rapidly giving way to the recognition of personal goodness in men, irrespective of dogma, creed, and catechism.

It must have been in the highest degree satisfactory to the friends of this distinguished preacher to receive at the time of his death the following precise telegram from Mentone: 'Our beloved pastor entered paradise this evening at eleven o'clock and five minutes.'

This statement conclusively proves that St. Peter—the story of whom, as above given, Spurgeon was so fond of repeating—did not, in his case at least, interpose the slightest delay.\*

\* See note at the end of the volume.



## CHAPTER XIX.

## A GOSSIP ABOUT OLD PARIS.

CROSSING the Channel on one of the finest days and smoothest seas which make the 'silver streak' worthy of that appellation, I congratulated one of the deck-hands, who was standing moodily with his hands in his pockets, upon the exceptionally good passage.

'Well, sir,' he rejoined, 'that's a matter o' opinion; this 'ere weather don't do no good to *me*. Look at them basins'—pointing to a pile of those unattractive receptacles stowed away under the seats—'we hain't had no call for 'em for more nor a week.'

Poor fellow! it was no *silver* streak to him, that glorious crossing, for his hopes were centred upon the miseries of humanity, and the smiling faces of the passengers made him wretched.

The trip across the Channel, of a little more than an hour, is an ever-present reminder of a great ethnological phenomenon. This short breadth of



shining water, crossed and recrossed by hundreds of thousands of Englishmen and Frenchmen, is a gulf between the antipathies of two of the noblest nations of the earth. Politically and socially England and France are as far asunder as if divided by thousands of leagues of ocean. In temperament and language, in manners and customs, in religious and political sympathies, the two peoples have few points of approximation. Yet it strikes the American observer as most extraordinary that, despite these disabilities, no thoroughly honest and thoroughly earnest efforts are made towards that political *rapprochement* which the interests of each nation demand. One *will* continue to be 'Johnny Crapaud' and the other 'Perfide Albion' at heart, notwithstanding the occasional gushings of the newspapers about 'our friends across the Channel,' and the diplomatic courtesies between the two Foreign Offices, when something like a sentimental alliance is rendered necessary by the exigencies of political events. The damp and foggy atmosphere of London contrasts with the average bright skies and vivacious aspect of Paris, as do the characteristics of the two nations, and I never cross from England into France without experiencing a buoyancy of feeling which is quite independent of the glittering frivolities of the gay capital.

Residing in Paris as I did for a succession of years,



I sometimes find myself wandering through the Latin Quarter to revive my recollections of some forty years before, when young and fresh to new impressions, many of which, inscribed with a fleeting pencil, time has failed to eradicate. That part of Paris has now materially changed in its foreign social life. It has become more cosmopolitan, and the richer class of foreign students, by their open-handed expenditure of money and a more luxurious life, has robbed it of the frugal simplicity of former days. I never resided on that side of the Seine, but I had friends among the students at the Beaux Arts and the École de Médecine as well as among artists—earnest, happy, economical young fellows, whose society was always interesting, and whose *sans-souci* manner of life amused me. I knew more than one among them who lived on five or six francs a day—bedroom, meals, wine, and fires included—and who found it an economy to pay for a seat at the theatre—*au paradis*—instead of staying at home and spending money on firewood. I don't know how they managed to get on at so small an expenditure, unless it was that the pretty and industrious grisette, who kept the room in order and enlivened it with her cheerful presence, as she sat with her *cher ami* over her sewing, contributed a portion of her gains towards the maintenance of the little establishment. Alas!—for



I really regard it as a misfortune—the grisette has passed away, with other notable changes in the quarter almost as regrettable. The—comparatively speaking—semi-respectability and domesticity which the grisette introduced into the wild life of many of the students is replaced to-day by the heartless and brazen-faced courtesan, who is little removed from the garbage of the *trottoir* over which she nightly walks. Many of the unpretentious little cafés, too, once the resort of men of letters, dramatists, and actors, have disappeared, giving place to gas-lighted and gilded establishments, where high prices and high life are incompatible with the moderate means and humble ambition of the average student.

Recrossing the river to central Paris, the old resident sees his former familiar network of narrow and tortuous streets transformed into magnificent avenues and wide boulevards, which, during the late Empire, sprung into existence under the magical wand of Baron Hausmann. It is pleasant to me to recognise, when I visit Paris, some of the old places of resort which have remained untouched by the hand of Time. The familiar sign of my old barber in the Rue Vivienne; the little cake-shop in the passage of that name, frequented now, as then, by noontide strollers; Tortoni's,\* whose ices have not been im-

\* Recently abolished.



paired by the corrupt air of revolutionary mobs in its vicinity; the Café Anglais, still furnishing steaks unequalled in their excellence—these, and a dozen other old lounging resorts, attest that dynasties and fashions and modern improvements may follow their courses in the movement of the world without crushing the *little* life of cities, which escapes on account of its own insignificance.

As I strolled down the boulevards during a recent visit to Paris, I was startled by what appeared to me a long-lost voice of the past. I used often to notice an old woman seated upon the side-walk, with two wooden sticks protruding from beneath her petticoats—in place of legs—as she peddled toy watches to the passers-by. ‘Achetez des montres—achetez des montres ; deux sous !’ was her cry, heard long before the pedestrian came within sight of her, and lingering on the ear after he had passed from her view. There, upon the same spot where I had so frequently observed her, forty years ago, sat apparently the same old woman, not a bit older, with the self-same garments, wooden legs, and shrill voice, crying: ‘Achetez des montres ; deux sous,’ as if she had not moved from her position during the interval of time. She turned out, however, not to be the original woman for whom I had mistaken her, but her counterpart legitimate successor, who, by dint



of her resemblance to the former, was permitted to hold out undisturbed at the 'old stand.'

To return to the Latin Quarter. Among my friends there in former days was a young medical student who invited me to visit him in his dissecting-room at the Academy of Medicine. The courtyard of that famous institution has, on one side of it, a row of doors, each opening into small surgical or dissecting rooms, appropriated to the students. The visiting-card of the occupant is generally tacked upon the door as a sign. On the morning in question I went to my friend's room (a small and horribly-smelling place, having on the walls and tables various implements of his profession), but he was not there. In fact it was too early for many to be about, and I saw no sign of vitality but the sleepy porter at the outside gate, who had admitted me as a friend of a student. A mysterious black-covered waggon stood in the courtyard, apparently newly arrived, as it was backed up to a large open door on the opposite side of the square, as if recently discharged of its load.

While waiting for my student friend to arrive, I sauntered slowly across and entered this open door. I found myself the only living being in a large, bare, brick-floored apartment, upon which lay extended, side by side, twenty corpses of both sexes, stark,



rigid, and cold. I had no idea of retreating ; on the contrary, a dreadful fascination held me spell-bound till I had gazed and become perfectly familiar with each of the shrunken, ghastly, fixed faces before me ; some open-mouthed and open-eyed ; some with clenched teeth and hands ; some almost featureless with the inroads of wasting disease before vitality had ceased. In a corner of this room a pile of children's corpses had been thrown promiscuously together, as being of less interest and value to those for whom these ' subjects ' were designed.

I had been in this strange company some minutes, when footsteps approached, and a man in a blue cotton blouse came into the room. Casting an inquisitive eye at me, as if to say, ' I wonder what *you* want at this time of day,' he proceeded, with the utmost nonchalance, to go through a process which evidently was his daily occupation, and one of the perquisites of his position. Lifting up the head of a female corpse, he straightened out the long black hair and immediately severed it with scissors from the crown. This process he repeated with each. Then tying together the accumulated 'glory of woman,' he proceeded with pincers to extract from the stiffened jaws all the teeth of either sex which were found to be in a perfect condition ! Loaded with these united spoils, he vanished at one end of



the building, while I, sick and faint at heart, got out of the door at which I had entered, eager for fresh air and for forgetfulness.

I had not taken many turns in the court before my student made his appearance, and in the course of another half-hour most of the class had assembled, and stood about the vicinity of the chamber of horrors waiting for the 'distribution.' As each name was called aloud, the individual alluded to proceeded to select his 'subject,' manipulating them in turn until he found the one whose physical condition of fat or lean presented the most suitable development of the part to be dissected. Having satisfied himself in these respects, the student would seize the body by the lower limbs, sling it over his shoulder as carelessly if he were a butcher taking a lamb to the slaughter (and perchance the resemblance was just), and stride across the court to his surgical den, there to lock himself in with his helpless victim, to be absorbed for the rest of the day in the fascinations of physiological research. It was a curious thought, as the eye ran down that long row of dark-closed doors, that behind each, securely locked in his silent sanctum, was one in the strength and ambition of youth bending with bare arms over the rigid form of death (which yesterday was a patient at the hospital), and absorbed with intensity



of interest in the developments of his revolting but necessary profession.

With another student friend, in the same profession, I would occasionally visit the hospitals or attend the clinical lectures of Dr. Philippe Ricord, the celebrated French surgeon, who, having been born in Baltimore, was for many years known in Paris as 'the great American doctor.' He was then surgeon-in-chief to the Hôpital des Vénériens du Midi, over which institution I was once taken, with the class that he instructed, by the doctor himself, witnessing an operation in the female ward which entirely precluded the possibility on my part of dining that day. Ricord was so congenial and amusing with his pupils that his very presence among them was hailed with pleasure, and whenever he delivered a lecture he was constantly interrupted by bursts of applause. I attended one of his lectures on a special subject, when, the day being very warm, the class assembled under the trees of the garden, the doctor standing on a chair during its delivery. Having described in detail the symptoms and development of the disease, he devoted the last five minutes to its cure, which was of a character so exceedingly palatable and satisfactory to the young men about him that, when he concluded, the whole class jumped upon their chairs, waved their hats



with frantic excitement, and screamed 'Bravo, bravo!' at the final witticism—*un peu vif*—with which he tickled their fancy. Ricord lived in very grand style, occupying a splendid hotel filled with works of art, where his entertainments were of a most *recherché* character. Wishing to see the interior of the establishment, I accompanied a young friend there, who had occasion to consult Ricord professionally for some slight malady. As the doctor's speciality was of a private nature, each patient as he arrived was shown by the valet—gorgeous in his livery—into a separate room to await his turn. In one of these waiting-rooms my friend and I sat for three hours, owing to the number of clients waiting to consult him, before an interview was obtainable. At last we were ushered into a large and handsomely-furnished salon where the great man was sitting at his desk, on which lay piles of silver five-franc pieces and gold napoleons, the fees paid by those who had preceded us. While my friend consulted the doctor, I took the opportunity of inspecting the paintings hanging on the walls. Observing this, Ricord asked me if I were fond of pictures. On my answering in the affirmative he rose from his seat and led me into an adjoining room, a grand picture-gallery, containing some of the finest examples of modern art. These



he pointed out in detail, expatiating upon them with all the enthusiasm of a *connaisseur*, and quite forgetting his patient in the next room until I reminded him of the fact. This remarkable man lived to the age of ninety. The story goes that years after he had retired into private life, and was living at his country seat, he was summoned one night at a late hour to attend a sick lady at her residence a few miles distant. Ricord, who was in bed at the time, was greatly annoyed, and sent back word to the servant who had come for him that he was no longer in practice, and never made a professional visit under any circumstances. The servant, however, insisted upon seeing the doctor, saying that his orders were peremptory, and that the case was very grave and exceptional. Admitted into his bedroom, Ricord asked the messenger how ill the lady was.

‘At the point of death,’ replied the man; ‘indeed, it is very doubtful if you will find her alive when you arrive.’

‘Then what is the use of a doctor?’ asked Ricord, and again explained that he could not attend to the case.

The man would not take ‘No’ for an answer, and stated that, although the case was hopeless, the family would be consoled by the visit of the doctor, in whom they had the most unbounded confidence.



As a last argument, Ricord informed the servant that if he went he should charge a high fee, to which the latter replied that his mistress would not mind that, as she was rich. Finally the doctor yielded, got up, dressed, and drove to the house of the patient, but she was dead when he got there. For this professional visit he sent in a bill of 5,000 francs, which was paid without demur.

It was in Louis Philippe's time that I first visited Paris, and to be presented at Court was, especially for a young man, an event of importance. Mr. King was the American Minister who presented me, with some half-dozen of my compatriots, to *the* King. For days I was in an agony of apprehension lest my Court suit, of buff, with gold lace, would not arrive from the tailors in time. And it did not. At the eleventh hour, I was forced to borrow a suit from the son of the Consul, which he had worn on a previous occasion, and which, with a slight alteration, fitted as if made for me. I had hired, with an extravagant friend of mine, a grand landau, with a negro driver and footman in livery, and a pair of spanking black horses, in which magnificent turnout we drove up, like a pair of princes, into the *grande cour* of the Tuileries. We failed, however, to see who were better off for our prancing horses and liveried negroes, except the proprietor of the livery-



stable and the flunkies who stood at the palace entrance. The scene within was a brilliant one, as all such scenes are. The ambassadors of all the Powers, with their respective countrymen, stood in line along the walls of the reception-room, a noble apartment, with frescoed ceilings and a shining parquet floor, which reflected our figures and the myriad of wax candles in the enormous chandeliers above, as if we stood upon a vast mirror. Presently 'Le Roi!' was announced by the master of ceremonies, and the King, followed by the Royal Family, entered the room.

Louis Philippe, with his face shaped like a pear, to which a pointed wig aided the resemblance, and corpulent figure, moved with princely ease from group to group, and was exceedingly affable with those with whom he held conversation. This was a mere matter of chance, for, as time would not permit of his addressing each individual in the assembly, his Majesty spoke to one in every half dozen or so, bowing only to the rest. As history repeats itself, so do the formalities and banalities of Courts. Miss Berry's account of her presentation to Bonaparte, in these same Tuileries, in 1802, very fairly represents my own experience with Louis Philippe, forty-three years subsequently. 'He, Bonaparte, asked me,' she writes, 'if I had been long in Paris, and other



royal nothings, speaking *par-ci et par-là* to about six or seven of us.' In my own case, the conversation opened with the same words: 'Have you been long in Paris?' and, again, twenty-three years after, in the same room, the Emperor Napoleon III. put to me the same question. After all, why should we expect, because a man has an invisible crown on his head, that he should differ from the rest of humanity, and invent something new to replace the stereotyped phrases of society? They have a hard time of it as it is, 'these poor kings and things,' and doubtless inwardly 'thank God *that's* over,' when they get through with the incessant formalities to which they are subjected.

When I had satisfied the royal curiosity as to the time I had been in Paris, he asked which State I was from, following up this question by, 'What is the present population of the State of Massachusetts?' For a moment I was nonplussed, having, I am ashamed to say, no definite knowledge upon the subject, besides being somewhat confused by the novelty of my position, and the fact that the American Minister and a group of my countrymen were craning their necks to catch each word of the conversation. But some answer had to be given—hesitation would be my downfall; so, striking blindly out into the darkness of arithmetical doubt, I uttered mechanically:



‘About a million, sir.’

‘Indeed! the State has grown very much since my day.’

‘Your Majesty will find that to be the case all over the United States.’

‘I suppose so.’

Then followed a few commonplace observations, and the King passed on.

‘Lucky fellow you are!’ said my friend Robinson, as we broke file when the ceremony was concluded; ‘if the King had asked *me* how many inhabitants there are in my State, I’ll be whipped if I could have told him.’

‘Ah, my dear fellow,’ replied I, ‘a man must be informed on matters connected with his own country if he expects to get on with credit abroad.’

Robinson was crushed. I never told him, not I, that the answer I had given to his Majesty haunted me half the night, lest I had made a ridiculous blunder, and that, not waiting for breakfast, I rushed down to Galignani’s book-store the following morning to settle matters with the geography. There, to my infinite relief, I read the following statistical information: ‘Massachusetts, one of the New England States of North America. Area, 7,800 square miles; population, 800,000.’ I had not made a bad guess, for the edition of the book was not the latest.



A week or two after, I attended the Court ball, which always succeeds a presentation, and was greatly mortified—this time with reason—at the performance of our Secretary of Legation, who, in the unavoidable absence of his chief, was invited to dance in the royal quadrille. At that time the Court costume prescribed by foreign governments for their representatives abroad had not been prohibited by the State Department at Washington, so that our Secretary was in full fig. Unaccustomed, perhaps, to the management of a dress-sword during the figures of the dance, that luckless appendage would get between his legs, now here, now there; now in, now out, and occasionally at right angles, threatening each moment to upset him, and actually upsetting the gravity of the royal party and the surrounding spectators.

But I did not myself escape a laughable incident later on in the evening. At the supper-table an awkward waiter spilled a glass of the royal claret over my buff waistcoat, giving it the appearance of being stained with blood, as if some jealous courtier had plunged a stiletto into my breast.

There were present on this occasion the Duc de Nemours, the Prince de Joinville, the Duc de Montpensier, and the Duc d'Aumale, with the princesses, the Duchesse d'Orléans being notably



absent on account of her long-continued mourning for her husband, whose fatal accident three years before, by being thrown from his carriage, had been an irreparable blow to the Royal Family, and to the dynasty. During the evening—fortunately before the calamity to my waistcoat occurred—I had the honour, for it was indeed an honour, of holding a brief conversation with that model lady, wife, and queen, Maria Amelia. She possessed many estimable traits of character, and was constantly engaged in charitable occupations. Her hatred of idleness or Court indolence led her to set an example of industry which was not lost upon her children or the members of the household. Even when waiting in the vestibule of the palace for the King to join her in the daily drive, she would take her knitting from her pocket to keep her hands employed. Democratic in her tastes, and indifferent to the stern etiquette of the Court, beyond what necessity demanded, she endeavoured in her manner of life, so far as possible, to conform to the ideas of her subjects. In these respects she was emphatically the ‘citizen Queen.’ I saw her one Sunday partaking of the Sacrament at the church of St. Roch, kneeling at the altar beside a negro woman of the humblest class. Talleyrand declared Queen Amelia to be ‘the last *grande dame* in Europe.’

It was at the palace ball, or, perhaps, on the



evening of the presentation, that, strolling with a friend through the long suite of rooms thrown open on that occasion, I was guilty of an act which falls within the category of 'youthful indiscretions.' The last room in the suite proved to be the Throne Room, where, on a richly carpeted platform under a daïs, stood the throne. It consisted of a large, deep armchair of enamelled white and gold, with armorial bearings, and cushioned seat and back of crimson velvet.

It was the first time that either of us had beheld a veritable throne, and we gazed upon it, if not with awe, with profound curiosity. We two being at the moment the sole occupants of the room, I startled my companion with the remark: 'I feel an irresistible inclination to seat myself on the throne of France. There is a novelty in the idea, and it seems practicable.'

'Nonsense!' he replied. 'I dare you to do it.'

That dare gave point and efficacy to my half-formed resolution. I threw a searching glance down the vista of rooms, to satisfy myself that I was unobserved, and then, with the temerity of youth, walked boldly up the carpeted steps, and, with an air of mock majesty, sat myself upon the throne. I found the royal velvet by no means uncomfortable, and but for a certain 'uneasiness' of mind, which



Shakespeare says belongs to kings, and which, I fully realized, disturbs usurpers, my reign might have been longer. Footsteps, however, were heard approaching, and, much to the relief of my companion, who had been staring at me in an agony of apprehension, I descended with the dignified bearing befitting the position.

Three years after this temporary occupation of the throne of Louis Philippe by a presumptuous youth of a distant republic, that unfortunate monarch fled from the capital in a hackney coach, clad in a workman's blouse, and holding in his hand a cotton umbrella, while on the same night an infuriated mob flung from the window of the Tuileries, and burned in a bonfire, the gilded and velvet throne on which I had sat, amid an uproar of voices shouting : 'À bas le Roi ! Vive la République !'

English and American society in Paris at that time was limited to small circles of residents mostly known to each other, and whose reunions and dinner-parties furnished all the social gaiety within their reach. The *salons* of the Faubourg, with very rare exceptions, were inaccessible to foreigners who had not some claim upon French society by virtue of family connection or long residence. At that time, for one to find one's self in a Parisian *salon*—one not to the manner born—was to realize the solitude of a



crowd. I was invited one evening to a party at the residence of an American lady whose apartment was in the French quarter of the city. Passing up the stairway, I joined the stream of elegant toilettes, and entered the grand *salon*. A lady, brilliant with jewels, and most delicately rouged and powdered—making her age an insoluble conundrum—received me with a courtesy which left nothing to be desired, excepting an explanation of the fact that she was an utter stranger to me. My hostess was evidently occupied at the moment elsewhere, and had delegated one of her Parisian guests to act for her until her return. Hoping to meet her on the way, I proceeded to the dancing-room. I not only failed, however, to recognise her in the crowd, but to recognise any face familiar to me. All were French, and it soon became apparent that my hostess had paid me the marked compliment of inviting me to meet the *haute noblesse* among her acquaintance at an exclusively French party. Arrived at the dancing-room, although I knew no one present, I was moved to find a partner, and catching the eye of a charming young lady, who seemed to be on the anxious seats, I found her complaisant enough to waive an introduction, and we were soon whirling around the room under the inspiring strains of the waltz. The dance ended, I conducted my partner to her seat, and, seating



myself beside her, enjoyed her charming conversation—all the more for her amusing attempts to carry it on in English. She was very naïve, and informed me that she had just left the convent, and that her parents, having found for her an excellent *parti*—whom, by the way, she had only seen half a dozen times—she was eagerly looking forward to married life as an open door to those social amusements which she appeared to believe were the chief end of matrimony. I asked her to tell me who some of the *grande dames* present were.

‘*Comment, monsieur !* You do not know any of the company? You have not made the knowledge of our *société*?’

‘No, mademoiselle, as yet I have only made the acquaintance of the Royal Family.’

Not seeing the joke, she immediately came to the conclusion that I was some grand *personnage*, and became very deferential. Then she pointed out the lady with the auburn locks as la Comtesse B—, and the very embonpoint lady in old lace and pearls as la Duchesse de M—, and the lady with remarkably fine neck and arms as la Marquise de F—, and so on, all of which went to show that my American hostess was a very clever woman to have managed so successfully to get into the thickest of the Faubourg cream.



‘And who,’ I continued, ‘is the lady opposite, who ever since I asked you to dance has been anxiously inspecting us through her lorgnon?’

‘That is *ma mère*, la Comtesse de G——, to whom I must you present, when you shall give me your name, monsieur.’

I gave my name, apologizing for not having given it before, and said that the moment our American hostess made her appearance I would ask her to do me the honour to present me to her mother the Countess.

At the words ‘our American hostess,’ my companion looked extremely puzzled.

‘*Comment, monsieur*, our hostess is not an *Americaine*. Know you not that this is the *salon* of la Comtesse X——?’

‘This the *salon* of the Countess X——?’ I exclaimed. ‘You don’t mean to say that I have—that I am——’

‘I think, perhaps, monsieur, that you have made a mistake. There is on the *étage* above one *famille Americaine*, who also are giving to-night a ball. Is it that you had the intention to go there, and not to come here?’

Mortified as I was to find that I had mistaken *au premier* for *au second*, I thought it best to join in the laugh against me, for the young lady’s merriment was greatly excited, and to beat a retreat with the best



grace possible. With many thanks for the pleasure I had had in her society, I bade my impromptu friend adieu—which she insisted should be *au revoir*—and, threading my way through the crowded rooms, mounted to the floor above. There I found my own party in full swing, and heard a buzz of voices unmistakably that of my compatriots. My hostess chided me for being so late, for which I excused myself, having been detained longer than I expected at the Countess's ball below. 'Ah, I was not aware that you were in French society,' she responded, in which I detected a shade of jealousy at the fact of my being a guest in a circle which was a *terra incognita* to herself, although she had resided for years on the floor above that occupied by the envied Countess.

The residents in apartments in Paris understand this well enough, and that the simple fact of families dwelling under the same roof, and constantly passing each other on the stairs, no more entitles them to make each other's acquaintance than if they lived miles asunder.

One of the things which have not changed during the revolution of governments and of society in Paris—at least, it has not at the present time of writing—is the cab-driver, distinguished now as then by that solid air of obtuseness which has earned for him the sobriquet of 'automaton,' and which vanishes



only and becomes vigorous in expletives and gesticulations when the unfortunate 'fare' is not sufficiently liberal with his *pourboire*. He is a shade more enlightened now than then as respects English-speaking customers, although he puts them all down as 'perfidious' Englishmen, and has only a vague idea that there exists, somewhere at the extreme end of the universe, a place called l'Amérique, inhabited by semi-savages. The following incident is absolutely true, and occurred during one of my early visits to Paris. A lady was disputing the fare with a cabman, and, finding him obstinate, threatened to report him to her husband, the American Consul, who would have him summoned before the *juge de paix*. The *cocher*, upon this, broke into ironical laughter. 'Bah!' he shouted at her. 'You an American? Where are your feathers? Where are your beads?'

In my own case I generally avoid discussion with cabmen where the amount involved is but a few sous, preferring to be taken in that much than to lose my time and temper. Their occupation, too, is a hard one, although, as a London cabby once admitted to a friend of mine, 'What between the onwary and the ginerous, I manage to pick up a living.' They certainly manage to do it in Paris, where the 'onwary' stranger, if he is unacquainted with the language, often finds himself *hors de combat*



in a conflict with cabby, or as another friend of mine put it, when referring to the wretched animal attached to the vehicle, *horse de combat*.

A young countryman of mine, who spoke French as well as he did English, and who had established an intimacy with a street cab-driver, whom he constantly employed and liberally tipped, questioned him one day as to his earnings over and above his legal fares and fees. The man admitted that his stealings, or, as he called it, his *petits bénéfices*, in that way sometimes amounted to ten francs a day.

Among amusements, the masked balls at the Grand Opera House have improved as a spectacular performance, so far as the magnificence of the interior decorations of the new building is concerned; but in my day the mingling costumes and curious antics of the company on the floor seemed to me to be more bizarre and characteristic than at present, and the supervision of the police to be less rigid in checking extravagances among the dancers. The character of the dominoes was generally of a higher class, and many ladies who in these republican days keep away from the entertainment, engaged behind their masks in intrigues which often resulted in duels between men of position. But then, as now, the poorer classes, if they could scrape together enough francs for a hired costume, mingled



in the mad throng that filled the arena, and played off their tricks and artifices with an abandon which often drew the inexperienced foreigner into a vortex of trouble, from which he did not escape without a large expenditure of money and personal reputation. It was a delight, however—never experienced in like degree elsewhere—to witness the intense enjoyment of the poor work-girls who whirled about in their cheap fancy costumes, graceful, vivacious, and without a thought of the morrow's toil in store for them, determined to extract from every moment of the long-looked-for occasion all that it could supply of unrestrained pleasure and excitement.

As I was walking along the boulevards one night with a friend, after having passed an hour looking on at the masked ball in the Opera House, our attention was attracted to a fair, pale-faced girl, poorly clad, but neat in person, who was gazing wistfully into the window of a shop where a collection of cheap and glittering costumes were advertised for hire. To this poor girl it was the nearest approach she could make to the spectacle itself, and her open mouth, flushed cheeks, and excited eyes, betrayed the absorbing interest she felt in a species of enjoyment that her betters could partake of, but from which she was debarred by the curse of poverty. It occurred to me that it would be a pleasant thing to make the



poor girl happy for a few hours by hiring a costume for her and providing a ticket of admission; but while I was debating in my own mind the expediency of so doing, my friend Forbes, one of the most impulsive and generous of men, who had conceived the same idea, put it into execution. It was quite unnecessary to ask the girl if she would like to go to the ball—that went without saying; so he simply invited her to go into the shop and select any costume she preferred. The proposition took her breath away, and she looked as much astonished as if she had been told to enter the gates of Paradise, and to her it was a Paradise which in her wildest dreams she had never expected to behold. To fill the measure of her joy, we decided to purchase, not hire, the costume, a simple affair in coloured cotton, but very gorgeous to her eyes, that she might use it on another occasion. In a few moments she appeared before us arrayed in all her magnificence, her face flushed with delight, and her heart too full to express the measure of her thanks. Having accompanied her to the entrance-door of the parquet, we ourselves went back to our *loge* in front of the house to see how she got on among the dancers. We at last made her out, standing just within the entrance, motionless with astonishment at the spectacle, and presenting as pretty a specimen of unconscious



beauty and of innocence—if such a thing as maiden innocence can exist at a *bal masqué*—as one might desire to behold. Of course she soon attracted the attention of those about her, and a group of fantastically-costumed youths, consisting of harlequins, brigands, courtiers, and what not, rushed madly after her, and something like a free fight would have ensued for possession of the prize, if, laughing with delight at finding herself the object of so much attention, she had not settled the matter by showing her preference for a youth in regimentals, who, encircling her waist with an air of triumph, whirled her off into the waltz, where we lost sight of her in the motley crowd. Having thus *lancéd* this poor little waif of humanity into, so to speak, one of the most ‘brilliant’ circles of Parisian society, my friend and I walked homewards, satisfied with the reflection that we had been instrumental in conferring happiness upon one individual among the million whose life of labour and penury is rarely enlivened by such an experience.

The light-heartedness of the French temperament is often misinterpreted for frivolity by their serious neighbours across the Channel; but to my mind it is provocative of admiration, if not of envy. But there is another side to the medal. When personal affliction falls upon a Frenchman or a Frenchwoman, or



a wide-spread calamity visits the nation, the reaction upon the mind is far more serious, while it continues, than upon the grave, contemplative minds of those who are born under Northern and depressing atmospheres. Then the French, as a general rule, lose their heads and give way to despair, where the English, under like circumstances, would go practically to work to remedy the evil.

This I saw illustrated in a remarkable degree in 1849, when the cholera broke out in Paris. A pall of dread, like a helpless nightmare, fell over the city, and the lassitude of terror, unaccompanied by the slightest attempt to rise to the exigencies of the occasion, except so far as the people were compelled to do so by police regulations, increased the scourge wherever it made its appearance. The lower classes went about with pale and haggard faces, moaning and sympathizing with their neighbours, but making no exertions to prevent the spread of the disease, in many instances not even reporting cases when they occurred in some thickly-populated quarters or private dwellings, lest the interference of the police should cause them personal inconvenience.

Certainly Paris, during the weeks that the cholera ravaged in its midst, presented a dreary spectacle. As for myself and a group of gay companions, I think we ordered better dinners and more champagne than



ever, under the impression that good living and a jolly existence were the best preventives of infection. Indeed, some diversion from the melancholy appearance of things was a necessity. From morning till night, and often through the entire night, the dead-carts, with their gruesome loads, traversed the boulevards, and people fell dead or dying in the midst of their occupations. One man, in the act of putting up the shutters of his shop, expired as I was passing by; and the *concierge* of my hotel, who had handed me the key of my room when I came in at nine o'clock, was being carried out a corpse as I passed out of the hotel on the following morning.

‘*Le bon Dieu la prit,*’ remarked my landlord; ‘*voilà !*’

And there was no more to be said about it.

Among the victims of the scourge was the once celebrated beauty, Madame Récamier, who for upwards of half a century was one of the most prominent figures in society, and, with Madame de Staël, was associated with many of the stirring political events of the period.

But I had seen the great city under still more depressing circumstances. In February, 1848, I left Paris for London. The growing unpopularity of Louis Philippe had been manifesting itself for a long while before my departure, and the newspapers



had enjoyed a license of political discussion extending to violent attacks upon the Government, which were meant for the King. The determined attitude of his Majesty in opposing electoral reforms and in forbidding popular assemblages, which, under the name of *banquets*, were really intended to foment and bring to a head the political discontent, exasperated the people and gave rise to alarming rumours of intended violent demonstrations in the streets ; but, excepting those who were behind the scenes and prompting the actors, few of the general public anticipated any immediate disorders. Political caricatures, showing, like straws, which way the wind blew, were freely exposed in the shop windows, and found ready purchasers. I preserved several of these. One represents a rotting pear *on the point of falling from the tree*, recalling the pear-shaped face of Louis Philippe, the indentations in the fruit indicating the features. Another represents the King as a baker, who, having already thrust several loaves into the oven, stands perplexed, with another on the shovel stamped ' Banquet,' *too large to pass through the orifice*. These and numerous pasquinades, which were hawked about the streets, it was hoped would, in a measure, act as safety-valves to the popular excitement, and avert more serious consequences. I crossed the Channel, therefore, without the least suspicion of



what was to come. A day or two after my arrival in London, the report of an *émeute* in the streets of Paris, followed by the news of a revolution; followed, again, by the statement that Louis Philippe had fled to England, startled Europe. I was greatly annoyed at having left on the eve of so interesting an event, and determined to return at once to Paris, although warned by my friends not to attempt it. Arrived at Calais, I had a fresh warning not to proceed further; but, relying upon my passport and American nationality, I pushed on, with a few fellow-travellers, and arrived with less delay than I had expected at the Paris *barrière*. There, however, I was peremptorily ordered to stop, and was subjected to a rigid police examination. Finally, my passport and an *argumentum ad hominem* released me, and, after a similar understanding with one of the few cabmen to be found in waiting, I rolled through the deserted streets in the direction of my hotel. The melancholy appearance of the city was in sad contrast with its normal condition of gaiety and beauty, as I had left it but a few days before; but, as I approached the boulevards, the scene changed to hurry and bustle. Men seemed to be wandering about with uncertain steps, as if in expectation of something yet to come. The shops were closed, as were most of the cafés. The beautiful trees along



the boulevard were either mutilated or cut down. Heaps of paving-stones, pieces of timber, firewood, and broken furniture—the remains of barricades—were heaped up or scattered along the thoroughfare and the adjoining streets. Gendarmes and policemen stood at every corner, and from time to time groups of wild-looking men, in shirt-sleeves or workmen's blouses, swaggered along the middle of the streets, singing the 'Marseillaise' or 'Mourir pour la Patrie,' until dispersed or arrested by the mounted dragoons.

My cab was stopped three times, and my person and papers inspected; and I found that the only way to avoid further annoyance was to proceed on foot, handbag in hand, by the less frequented side-streets. But even in this way I had rather a hard time of it when crossing the broader thoroughfares, and was rejoiced when I found myself within the shelter of my hotel, bare as it was of guests.

The recuperative powers of the French people are as remarkable as their national history. Knock them down with a baton inscribed 'Waterloo' or 'Sedan,' and while we gaze upon the prostrate body, still and pale with the similitude of death, lo! the cheeks flush with returning animation, and before we can find words to express our sympathy, they are up upon their feet again and about their business.



Fling Paris into the streets with the force of a revolution, and she rebounds like an elastic ball higher than the point from which it descended. Within a few days of my arrival all signs of disorder were at an end; the boulevards, with the exception of the poor ill-treated trees, resumed their former aspect; nonchalant promenaders filled the side-walks; the cafés presented their usual groups of outside sitters, and the garçons flitted about among the tables, shouting 'Bon' to the repeated calls for absinthe and coffee. There were, however, portions of the city over which hung an unwonted gloom, especially in the neighbourhood of the Tuileries. With the exception of the guard of soldiers stationed there to prevent pillage, the Place du Carrousel was deserted. As I strolled through the silent square, I noticed a dark spot upon the pavement which had a history to tell, for there the bonfire had been built in which crackled and perished the throne of Louis Philippe, a piece of furniture in which, I remembered with a smile, I had at one time felt a *personal* interest.

What a halo of associations clings to the stately square and the magnificent building that surrounds it! What a stream of exciting events! What a procession of throned and dethroned monarchs passes before the mind's eye as one stands in contemplation before it! How has history repeated itself



on this very spot! 'Comme Charles Dix, comme Charles Dix!' exclaimed Louis Philippe, as he escaped from its walls. 'Comme Louis Philippe!' must have thought Eugénie as she fled in disguise from the same gilded *salons* to join the Emperor in his exile. The same malignant spirit which led the *sans culottes* of the revolution to sack the royal rooms deserted by Louis XVI., inspired, three-quarters of a century later, the friends of the Commune, who mistook liberty for license, to burn and destroy its historic walls; and the same cowardly folly which sought to remove every trace of monarchism from monuments and streets during the Reign of Terror, repeated itself in the same senseless proceedings when the Republic succeeded the Empire of the third Napoleon.

But for the wit of a single individual—a passer-by at the time—a portion of the ornamental sculpture on the façade of the Tuileries would have been forever destroyed. An enthusiastic French workman, cheered on by the crowd below, clambered up the outside of the palace, with a hammer in his hand, and commenced knocking off the letter 'N' which is carved at intervals along its entire length. At every blow of the hammer the crowd responded with cries of 'Bravo, bravo!' The passer-by, shocked at the desecration of the building, conceived a happy idea.



‘That letter does not stand for Napoleon, you fool!’ he shouted up to the man; ‘it stands for *Nationale*!’ The fellow with the hammer, surprised and mortified, stopped his work, and the impulsive crowd, Frenchmen-like, veered around and changed their cheers for shouts of derision. ‘Come down, come down, you stupid!’ was now the cry; ‘it stands for *Nationale*, not Napoleon! Come down, come down!’ and the hero of a moment before came down and slunk away, followed by the jeers of the spectators.



## CHAPTER XX.

## NAPOLEON III. AND THE EMPRESS EUGÉNIE.

IT was in 1868, when passing through Paris, that the American Minister, General Dix, proposed to present me to the Emperor. I declined the honour, as I had but one day left, and that a very busy day, before starting on a long journey. But Dix, who was a great favourite at Court, thought it might be managed for that very evening, which chanced to be one of the Empress's '*petit Lundis*.' In other words, there was to be a ball at the palace, at which, he was of opinion, his Majesty would waive the previous formalities usually enforced on such occasions, and receive me. I myself thought this so very doubtful that I dismissed the matter from my mind, especially when by five in the afternoon nothing more had been heard from the Minister. When I got back to my hotel for dinner I found a note from the General—left but a few moments before—enclosing a card for the ball, and informing



me that he would call for me at eight o'clock to accompany me to the Tuileries. I was totally unprepared for this at so late an hour, but as an imperial request is an imperial command, there was no help for it, and I summoned all my wits to meet the requirements of the occasion. In the space of one hour by the watch, I had hired and equipped myself with knee-breeches, buckled shoes, cocked hat, and dress sword, and was standing in line in the audience-room, with the General at my side, awaiting, with the members of the Court circle, the appearance of the Emperor.

I had studied Louis Napoleon's imperturbable countenance on the previous day, Sunday, in the Emperor's private chapel in the Tuileries, as he stood for upwards of an hour, with the young Prince Louis at his side, immovable, like an effigy of himself in waxwork, holding his missal open in his hand; but although his eyes were fixed upon it, I observed that he never turned a leaf. Where his thoughts were it would have been interesting to know, for certainly they had no sort of connection with the service in which he was supposed to be engaged.

Directly the Emperor appeared in the audience-room, he walked straight up to where General Dix and I were standing, and the presentation took



place. He looked careworn and self-absorbed, although no Sedan had yet loomed in the distance, and to all outward appearance the political horizon was clear of clouds. But there was a mist of dissatisfaction slowly gathering around the Government, which magnified the recent 'mistakes' of the Emperor in the popular eye. Republican ideas were gaining ground with the liberal 'reforms' which had been introduced by the Ministry with the opposite intention of increasing their own popularity. Gambetta and Jules Ferry were about to advance upon the scene, and Henri Rochefort was preparing to light his *Lanterne*.

After the usual banalities, the Emperor referred to the object of my journey, I being then on my way to Athens, with the observation that 'Greece is an interesting country—that is'—as if he had gone too far, and remembered certain diplomatic questions still on the *tapis*—'it *used* to be.' This remark did not impress me as particularly original or as embodying any political sophistry, such as popular opinion at that time attributed to every utterance from the imperial lips. I hoped that his Majesty would continue his remarks on a subject in which I was immediately concerned, and respecting which I was curious to know his political views, for the support of France was eagerly desired by Greece



to counterbalance the coldness and indifference of more than one of the protecting Powers. But the Emperor remained silent, as if he expected some response from me. I therefore remarked, '*Very interesting, your Majesty;*' and I expressed the hope that the interest in that young and struggling kingdom might awaken the Great Powers to an active sympathy in behalf of her just territorial claims.

To this there was no response but a slight lifting of the eyelids, and a more attentive look than had thus far been accorded to the person he was addressing. I again interpreted the pause as a desire for me to continue my observations, which I did, referring to the progress made by Greece since her independence, and to the position she held as an important factor in the politics of Eastern Europe.

'She has undoubtedly a future before her,' responded the Emperor, and he was on the point of enlarging upon the subject, when the Empress came up to me, with General Dix, that I might be presented. With some vague observation about seeing me again later in the evening, his Majesty passed on.

The Empress Eugénie presented a charming contrast to her imperial spouse, being in a most cheerful frame of mind, very gracious and disposed for conversation. Discovering, after a few remarks, that



I had known, when in China, her 'dear old friend' Madame de Bourboulon—*née* Macloud of Boston, and wife of the French Ambassador to China—she recounted her reminiscences of that lady in a most animated and agreeable way, forgetting, for the moment, that a gentleman standing next to me was also to be presented. He was a highly distinguished man from Boston, and I expected to hear an interesting conversation between the two, but, unfortunately, he made a remark, directly he was presented, which, intended by him as a compliment, produced the opposite effect.

'This is not the first time, your Majesty, that I have had the honour of making your acquaintance,' he observed; 'for at your father's house in Madrid, many years ago, when you were a young girl, I held you on my knees. I feel therefore that I know you very well.'

He had not the faintest idea that there was anything *mal à propos* in the remark, thus made on a ceremonious occasion and within the hearing of the Court circle. A slight colour suffused the Empress's cheeks, and, drawing herself up with offended dignity, she coldly replied, '*That*, indeed, was knowing me *very well*;' and turning from him with a formal inclination of the head, she proceeded to the ballroom, where the guests were beginning to assemble.



In contrast with the magnificent toilettes gathered in the ballroom, I was struck by the simplicity of the Empress's attire. Although of expensive materials, the colours were subdued, and the jewels upon her neck and arms did not excite special attention from their abundance or their brilliancy. She was noted at the time for her modest toilettes, an example purposely set, but which was by no means followed by her guests. In fact, I had occasion to remark to General Dix, in the course of the evening, that I had seldom seen at a ball such a profusion of magnificent jewels. Two Russian ladies, for example, of great distinction, had the crowns of their heads completely concealed by skull-caps composed of large diamonds, and the neck of another was rendered invisible by successive rows of graduated pearls, which, it seemed to me, it must have taken a lifetime to collect. The General smiled, and whispered in my ear: 'More than half the jewellery we see here to-night is imitation.' How near he was to the truth it was difficult to ascertain.

The Empress moved among her guests with a devotion to their personal interests not always observable on the part of so distinguished a hostess. She had a smile or a word of friendly recognition for each, and I remarked that on several occasions when she passed a young lady or young gentleman who



appeared to be in want of a partner for the dance, she effected the necessary introductions, and sent them whirling off in the waltz delighted with her courtesy and kindness.

The supper-room, in which, during Louis Philippe's time, a careless lackey once deluged my buff waistcoat with claret, had on the present occasion a single buffet at its upper end, extending from wall to wall, leaving the body of the room free for the guests to circulate, and to help themselves as inclination prompted. But when the Emperor entered to partake of refreshments, there was a sudden hush of voices, and the whole assembly fell back to the right and left, crowding up against the walls as if awe-stricken by the imposing presence. And imposing it was in more senses than one. His Majesty, in black silk tights and diamond shoe-buckles, walked, or rather *posed*, down the middle of the open space with that solemn dignity befitting his exalted position. Arrived, amidst the intense stillness, at the buffet, his Majesty partook, with excessive moderation of manner, of an ice, standing with his back to his guests, who watched with speechless interest every motion, as if the fate of the Empire depended upon each successful swallow of the slippery compound. The feat accomplished, his Majesty walked back again with the same measured and dramatic tread



until he disappeared among the dancers in the adjoining apartment. Then the company took a long breath, mingled together again, and the rustling of silks and buzz of conversation were resumed, 'as forest leaves are wind-swept after lulls.'

I could not but recall at that moment the occasion when Napoleon Bonaparte enacted the part of a voluntary policeman in London, both characters being performed with equal ability, as sometimes a versatile actor 'brings down the house,' whether he plays 'Boots at the Swan' or 'Julius Cæsar.'

I believe that Louis Napoleon possessed far more character than some of his biographers have been willing to accord to him. He was emphatically a child of fortune, but his own ingenuity and cleverness at expedients turned the wheel which otherwise would have stood still. A discussion once took place in print as to his personal courage; but, notwithstanding Kinglake's assertion to the contrary, I do not believe that on the frequent occasions when the Emperor exposed his life in the streets of Paris, and on the battle-field of Sedan, he was actuated by any lesser motives than self-devotion, under the influence of impelling public duty.

I was told by the Emperor's dentist that on one occasion, when he was operating upon him in a high



upper room of the Tuileries, the figure of a man in a blouse suddenly appeared outside the window. How he got there, and for what purpose, unless to assassinate the Emperor, the dentist could not imagine, and he himself started back with alarm at the apparition. His Majesty, however, moved not a muscle, sitting with that 'semi-somnolent, lethargic expression' so habitual with him. He simply requested the doctor to ring the bell, and when the servant appeared, it was explained that the man in the blouse was a workman ascending to the roof to make repairs. The doctor told me he had never seen an instance of more perfect self-possession.

I next met the Empress Eugénie at a Court ball in the palace at Athens. She was on her way to the celebration of the opening of the Suez Canal, and was passing a few days with the King and Queen of Greece. On this occasion I was again favoured with a lengthy conversation, the subject of which I have forgotten; but it was of sufficient interest to her to divert her attention from the guests, in line, who were waiting to be presented. Finally, Queen Olga crossed the room and reminded the Empress of the fact. As we stood *vis-à-vis*, and under the strong light of numerous chandeliers, I noticed more in detail her personal appearance, and was sorry



to perceive that she resorted to artificial means to heighten the beauty of her delicate features.

‘Do you ever write to your President?’ asked the Empress one day at a palace dinner. ‘If you do, I wish you would tell him that it is the dearest wish of my heart to visit your great and wonderful country.’

‘And may I add, madam, that there is a possibility of your Majesty’s doing so?’

‘I fear not. I must have some *raison d’être*, you know, besides mere amusement. Cannot you think of something that would seem to justify the visit?’

‘Something *political*, madam?’ I replied, rather wickedly, I fear, as I recalled to mind the Emperor’s failure in the attempt to support Maximilian in Mexico, and his enforced withdrawal of the French troops at the remonstrances of the United States.

‘Oh, no, no! certainly nothing political! Now, if you had a commercial enterprise in view—something in which France could join—*that* would be very nice! If, for instance, it were not for the celebration of the opening of the Suez Canal, I should not have had the pleasure of this visit to Athens.’

‘Unfortunately, madam, we have not at present any inter-oceanic canal to invite you to, but I can insure you a most enthusiastic welcome from our Government and people.’

‘I am sure of it,’ she answered. ‘I like your



countrymen so much, and I have many friends among them in Paris. Now, don't forget to think the matter over, and let me know if anything suggests itself.'

It was by such amenities that Eugénie acquired so much of her popularity with foreign diplomatists. But she did not conceal her personal antipathies when, in the course of political events, those functionaries, in the performance of their duties, caused irritation in Government circles. I asked the Empress on one occasion, when she had been speaking in favourable terms of General Dix, when Minister at Paris, how she liked another foreign diplomatist, at one time at that Court, naming him. She replied :

'We liked General Dix very much.'

'And Mr. ———, madam ?' I responded, pressing home the question.

With a significant smile she repeated :

'We liked General Dix very much.'

When next I met this distinguished lady, history had recorded one of the most eventful revolutions in public affairs of modern days. The Franco-German War had swept away the French empire, the Emperor Napoleon had died in exile, and the fair Eugénie was passing her widowhood at the château at Chislehurst, England, with her son Prince Louis.

I had met at an evening party in London Count



de Clary, the *intendant* of the Empress, who spoke to me of the sad vicissitudes which had overshadowed her life, and added that, although greatly depressed in spirits, she always seemed glad to receive and converse with those who had known her in her prosperous days. The Count thought she would be pleased to see me, and suggested that I should apply by note to him for an 'audience.' Some little time after this I did so, and received a very gracious reply, to the effect that her Majesty remembered me perfectly, and would receive me on a specified day and hour.

Chislehurst, about an hour's distance by rail from London, is an attractive little town, and was the residence of the Empress. On the road to it from the railway-station was a handsome and commodious building, situated in a park of fine old trees. I was ushered into her Majesty's boudoir, a tastefully arranged and decorated room, the walls hung with choice engravings, and artistic objects catching the eye from tables and niches, attesting the refinement of the illustrious occupant. I had scarcely time to glance at these, when the Empress made her appearance. I was immediately struck with the change that time and mental suffering had wrought in her since I saw her last in the palace at Athens, bright and beautiful, graceful in movement, and sumptu-



ously attired. She was now clad in deep mourning, which threw into relief the pale and somewhat attenuated features, the white streams of her widow's cap falling back from her shoulder, but not concealing the symmetry of the bust and neck.

With a sad smile of welcome, she extended her hand and expressed pleasure at receiving me; then seating herself in a *fauteuil*, she pointed to another chair, which she asked me to draw up directly in front of her, that we might converse the more conveniently. 'Still nearer,' she said, as I placed the chair at a respectful distance; and she indicated the place, which was so close to her that our feet almost touched. Her voice was subdued, and she was evidently disinclined to raise it above the level of a quiet and familiar chit-chat. For a moment she looked depressed as she recalled the difference of the circumstances under which we had last met, and her questions about my journeyings and experiences during this interval were purely conventional, and exhibited no feeling of personal interest. But as the conversation proceeded to topics of a more general character, the old and winning smile came back again, as sunshine breaks from a cloud and illumines an otherwise desolate landscape.

The interview lasted for more than an hour, during which a great variety of topics came up for



discussion. Speaking of the relations between France and the United States, she regretted that our commerce with France seemed latterly to be falling off.

‘Why do you import so many silk goods from other countries,’ she asked, ‘when you might get all you want from Lyons and St. Etienne?’

She had the statistics at her fingers’ ends, and her familiarity with the subject greatly astonished me; for I could scarcely think that in my case she had, as is customary with important personages, prepared herself beforehand with information on the subjects likely to be discussed. She scarcely touched, as was natural under the circumstances, upon French politics, but inadvertently letting fall the words, ‘My poor country!’ I ventured the remark that everything in France was so uncertain, that no one could venture to predict what astonishing changes might not occur in the form of government. Republicanism in France was on its trial, and it remained to be seen how far it would succeed as a popular and stable institution.

‘Yes,’ she responded, ‘*il reste à savoir*. In the meantime, what sort of a republic is that where the Chamber of Deputies has to meet in a *village*?’—referring to the sittings then being held at Versailles. ‘What a contrast this presents to the noble and dignified Government of the United States!’



I reminded her that our people had grown up from their infancy with their institutions, which were no longer an experiment, and that their permanency was established by a century of political experience. I adverted to her Majesty's once expressed wish to me to visit the United States, and suggested that the journey might under present circumstances distract her thoughts and benefit her health.

'Not now, not now! too late, too late!' she exclaimed in the saddest of tones, and then relapsed into silence. After a moment of intense reflection, she added: 'I have nothing left me now to enjoy but the memory of my husband and the hopes of my son.'

Alas! even those hopes were soon to be cruelly crushed by the savage murder of Prince Louis, under circumstances which made that event excruciatingly severe. She had got upon a more cheerful subject of conversation, when a servant entered and announced to the Empress the arrival of the young Prince, who had been absent from home on a visit. Her face lighted up with satisfaction, and rising from her chair with the intention of going to meet him, or of sending for him, I thanked her for her kindness in having allowed me to pay my personal respects to her, and took my leave. As I reached the door, she called me back to know if I would not



like to visit the mausoleum of the late Emperor in the private chapel, and sent for the chaplain, Monseigneur Goddard, to accompany me, which he did.

This visit to the ex-Empress was especially interesting to me at the time it was made ; for to converse with the principal actress in a political drama of such importance as that which had so recently occurred was far more impressive than to read the description of personages, embellished as they too frequently are by sensational writers, who avoid small details in order to present startling general effects. It is often the little nothings in the lives of individuals which indicate the real character of the hero or heroines in history.



## CHAPTER XXI.

## ATHENIAN REMINISCENCES.

ONE morning, while engaged in writing at the legation at Athens, the servant announced that a woman desired to see me on very pressing business, but declined to send in her name. I said that I would see her in five minutes. As he turned to leave the room, the woman, who had followed him to the door, flung it open, rushed in, advanced in an excited manner to where I was seated, threw herself at my feet, clasped my knees, and frantically exclaimed :

‘ Oh, sir, save my son—save my son !’

She was clad in a travelling costume, which was disordered and grimy, as if from a long journey, and when she entered the room held a travelling-bag in her hand, which she dropped on the carpet when she fell at my feet. As she raised her despairing face towards me, tears were coursing down her cheeks, and her whole expression was one of abject misery.

When the unhappy woman was in a condition to



state her case with calmness, I ordered refreshments to be served to her in an adjoining room—for she had eaten nothing since her arrival that morning in Athens—and promised to confer with her when the repast was ended.

The circumstances of the case were these: When I arrived at Athens to inaugurate the Mission, there having been no official there but a Consul to protect American interests at the capital, I found that functionary had deserted his post, the archives had been deposited elsewhere for safe-keeping, and the only evidences that such an official had ever existed were a collection of empty bottles and unpaid bills, which clearly demonstrated the capacity of the late occupant for fulfilling his official duties. He had suddenly disappeared from Greece, and no trace of his whereabouts could be found for several weeks. At last news was received from the American Minister at Constantinople that he had turned up in that city, not as a passing tourist, but as a prisoner in handcuffs, and under the escort of Turkish soldiers. The worthy Consul had been captured in Asia Minor during a skirmish with Turkish troops, as the inspiring spirit, if not indeed the actual leader, in an insurrection of the Arabs against the Imperial Government. The prisoner was lodged in gaol, there to await his trial for conspiracy and high



treason, the penalty for which is death. My colleague at Constantinople was using his utmost endeavours to effect the release of our countryman before trial—no easy task, for he had been taken *in flagrante delicto*, weapon in hand, and the Turkish authorities were in no mood to listen to any appeal, even from a foreign Minister, on behalf of a prisoner for whom no possible excuse could be invented for a high-handed crime, involving the very existence of the Government. Treason was rampant at the time in Syria, and now was the opportunity to check it by the public execution of one of the rebellious leaders. My colleague wrote me that the case was almost hopeless, for if brought to trial condemnation was certain.

At the time of the visit of the prisoner's mother, I was diligently engaged in collecting such meagre evidence as could be collected favourable to the personal character of the Consul during his tenure of office at Athens, hoping against hope that some trait of respectability might be discovered to give colour to the appeal for mercy. We trusted upon obtaining sufficient influence at Constantinople to defer the trial until public excitement was over, when possibly the sentence of death would be commuted to imprisonment, in which case—by a process not altogether without precedent in Turkish affairs—the release of the prisoner would in time be effected.



The mother of the unfortunate man was a most respectable person. She was on her way to Constantinople, having travelled without a single stoppage some 5,000 miles from her home in a distant State in the hope that her personal appeal to the Turkish authorities, through the Minister, would be of avail. Although still agitated, she was able to give a clear account of her son's life before his appointment to office, which on the whole was satisfactory. It appeared, however, that he was somewhat eccentric, fond of adventure, and easily led away by boon companions to excesses. His appointment as Consul, at the solicitation of a prominent politician from his own State, was one of those blunders which frequently occur—and which will continue to occur—under the 'spoils' system, which, so far as appearances go, will not be eradicated until our legislators are better acquainted than they now are with the requirements of the Civil Service abroad.

As we conversed, an idea occurred to me.

'Has there ever been a case of insanity, madam, in your family?' I asked.

'Insanity!' she exclaimed with indignation, not seeing my point; 'nothing of the kind, sir. My people are all clear-headed, and know what they are about. As to my son, there never was a more——'

'Stop a moment,' interrupting what I feared might



be an unfortunate statement. 'Tax your memory, and try to recall if there has not been, on some exceptional occasion, a blood relative of yours, or of your husband, who betrayed aberration of mind—delirium, say—during illness, or something of the kind.'

'No, sir,' she answered, after reflecting. 'I don't recollect any such case worth speaking of.'

'Can you remember a case *not* worth speaking of?'

Yes, she remembered that one of her husband's sisters had 'wandered a bit' in her mind during the puerperal fever that followed the birth of her first child. 'But then she was——'

'Never mind what she was. Can you declare on your honour that this lady—a blood relation of your family—was at that time, no matter for how long, temporarily insane?'

'Temporarily—yes; but then, you see——'

'I see a good deal. Drowning men catch at straws, and this straw you must cling to, madam, if you would save the life of your wretched son.'

'How is that?' she asked, a gleam of hope illuminating her features.

I explained how, now that she had committed herself to an absolute statement, and without encouraging her to be too confident of the result, informed her that no Government could liberate a



criminal condemned for a capital offence from merely sentimental considerations. There must be a valid pretext for doing so, however intrinsically weak that pretext might be.

It took but a few minutes to draw up an affidavit, duly signed and bearing the seal of the Legation, that insanity had occurred in the family of the prisoner. This document I forwarded to my colleague at Constantinople, for what it might be worth, in the way of assisting his efforts in behalf of the prisoner. Then the woman left for Constantinople in a somewhat better state of mind than when she arrived at Athens.

How far the insanity plea weighed in the judgment of the Turkish officials, I never thought it worth while to inquire; but, after weeks of delay and official pressure on the part of my colleague at the Sublime Porte, the Turks, anxious to avoid complications with our Government, consented to liberate the prisoner, without trial, under the written guarantee of the American Minister that the culprit should be shipped off at once to the United States, never to set foot again in the dominions of the Sultan.

One of those bores who haunt legations abroad, endeavouring to get their inventions adopted by foreign Governments, came repeatedly to press upon my attention the wonderful properties of an explosive



machine, which he was confident would blow the Turkish army in Crete—which island was then in the throes of insurrection—to perdition, if only the Greek Government would give him a contract for the supply of the machines. The machine consisted of a clockwork apparatus enclosed in a box, which, when 'set' and buried in the ground, would, at a given moment, explode the fulminating powder within and destroy any number of the enemy standing over the spot at the time.

The Minister of War at Athens had consented to witness some experiments with the machine, which, so far as its explosive power was concerned, were eminently successful; but how a given number of the enemy could at a given moment be cajoled, or driven, to stand over the exact spot at the instant of explosion, was not so clear. Failing to meet with success in that quarter, the enterprising Yankee determined to make a claim upon the Greek Government for his expenses out and home, on the ground that he had been advised by the Greek Minister at Washington—probably to get rid of him—to exhibit his invention at Athens. This claim the Minister of War declined to allow. Nothing daunted, the American sought an interview with the King. This occurred before the establishment of our Legation at Athens; and as there was no official to present him,



in accordance with the rigid requirements of that Court, he was a little embarrassed how to proceed. Finally, he resolved to try it on *in propria persona*, and, mounting the marble steps of the palace, requested to see the Grand Chamberlain. That functionary, who spoke English fluently, was very polite to the American; but being a great stickler for Court etiquette, and bound to its observance, he could only promise—in view of the peculiar circumstances of the case—to mention it to his Majesty. The King was much amused, but consented to see the American on a day appointed.

The King himself gave me an account of the interview, which, so far as I recall it, was as follows: There entered the room such an original individual as his Majesty had never before encountered in the palace; a tall, lank, long-haired man in a gray travelling suit, holding in his hand a white beaver hat, if not an umbrella. He strode up to a table upon which he deposited his beaver, advanced towards the King, who was standing in the middle of the apartment, gave a preliminary stare at his Majesty, as if to judge what manner of man he might be, and with outstretched arm seized the Sovereign by the hand, shook it like a pump-handle, and exclaimed: ‘King, I’m glad to see you!’ Then, entering *in medias res* upon the business he had come



upon, he expatiated upon the capabilities of his infernal machine, the discouragement he had met with at the hands of the Minister of War, and the claim he now made for his travelling expenses.

The King appears to have listened with great patience to the statement, but, as might have been expected, he declined to interfere in the affair, and referred him back to the Minister of War to arrange matters with him as he best could. Failing again to make any impression upon that functionary, he determined to await the arrival of the American Minister at Athens, hoping with his assistance to be able to screw something in the way of pecuniary compensation out of the Greek Government. In the meanwhile he had crossed over with his machine to the island of Crete, in the hope of inducing the insurgent chiefs to experiment with it, and if successful to contract with him for a further supply. To his great disappointment, although he succeeded in blowing a large quantity of earth into the air, the sagacious Greeks did not seem to see it from the inventor's point of view, and gave him clearly to understand that they preferred open warfare to buried boxes of clockwork treachery.

When, on his return to Athens, he laid his case before me, I naturally asked him why he had not introduced the machine to the attention of the



Department of War at Washington during the rebellion, and so saved General Grant the time and trouble of 'fighting it out on that line all summer.'

He said that he had done so, and had been referred to General Grant himself, but, somehow or other, whenever he called at headquarters the General was always 'engaged,' and could not see him. Once he had managed to catch sight of him at a distance, after being refused an interview, and discovered that his 'engagement' consisted in smoking a cigar.

This man, no doubt, was perfectly honest, and thoroughly believed in himself and in the success of his machine, a delusion which is common with ninety-nine out of every hundred inventors, and which results in the final deposit of their models in the tomb of the Patent Office.

I could not conscientiously assist my compatriot in prosecuting his claim upon the Greek Government for pecuniary compensation, and left him to his own devices in that quarter. This he thought a great hardship, and expressed himself upon the subject in rather emphatic language when he took leave of me. But, with Yankee perseverance and shrewdness, he pestered the War Department until it was glad to get rid of him with a gift of some 10,000 drachmas, if I remember rightly, which enabled him to return home with his precious machine. Seem-



ingly, he regretted his discourteous remarks to me, for he subsequently wrote me from the United States a very characteristic letter, denouncing the ignorance of the Greeks on the subject of materials of war, and of his machine in particular, which he still hoped they might adopt. He added, with unblushing assurance, that if I could induce the Greeks, or any one of them, to give him a contract for the supply of the machine, he would allow me a very liberal commission.

I had many specimens of the *genus Americanus* among the visitors at the Legation, some of whom it was a great pleasure to meet, and all of whom it was a satisfaction to serve; but many of the applicants appeared to entertain the notion that the chief purpose of a Minister abroad is to furnish information to his travelling countrymen respecting hotels, how to get about, where to do their purchasing, and how to escape the payment of fees to guides and servants. When James Russell Lowell was Minister at Madrid, one of his first despatches to the Secretary of State was a complaint of such vexations, and a request that the department would cause it to be publicly announced that a foreign Legation must not be confounded by travellers with a General Agency Office. In my own case there seemed to be no matter too insignificant to bring to the notice of the Legation,



and the slightest hesitation to comply with the demands of tourists excited their indignation. I had on one occasion a deputation of 'Cook's tourists,' who complained that they could not obtain suitable rooms at the hotel specified for their accommodation on Cook's tickets, the best rooms being already occupied by travellers who had preceded them. To oblige the disconsolate party, I accompanied them to the hotel, and held a parley with the landlord; but there was no cause for redress, and previous occupants of rooms could not be turned out for later arrivals. The case was made clear to the gentlemen by personal inspection of the occupied rooms, and they consented to take others; but I fear they held me personally responsible for their disappointment, under the vague idea that if American citizens travelling abroad are not satisfied with their hotel accommodations, it is the duty of the Legation to supply them with better ones.

On another occasion a party of three called upon me to inquire if it were 'safe' for them to visit the battle-ground of Marathon, referring to the possible danger from brigandage. I represented to them that although 'Greek' brigandage had not existed in the kingdom for several years, the possibility always existed of a raid of these outlaws from the Turkish provinces, and that for precaution's sake the Greek



authorities were prepared to furnish a mounted guard for tourists into the interior, when applied for by a foreign Legation. Such a guard I would have ready for them in four hours should they decide to make the excursion. They asked how much it would cost for the guard. I said there was no charge for the service, but that it was the custom for excursionists to give a gratuity to the soldiers on their return if satisfied with them, as they received no pay from the Government for this extra service, which occupied a good many hours, and involved no little responsibility. I named the amount usually paid, which was exceedingly moderate. They held a consultation together as to the expediency of parting with a few drachmas to secure their personal safety, which resulted in the opinion that they 'guessed they wouldn't take a guard.' Again they pressed me to say whether I thought the proposed excursion would be unsafe if they went without a guard. I declined to commit myself, and jocosely added that if they went unprotected I might have to distinguish myself by obtaining a ransom for their release. I added that, in my own case, I should certainly not undertake such an expedition without a mounted Government guard. They left me in an undecided state of mind, and I heard nothing more of them.

It must have been a year or two after this incident



that the memorable massacre of four foreigners in Greece — three Englishmen and an Italian — by brigands from the Turkish provinces created an intense excitement, not only in Greece, but all over Europe. While the negotiations for the ransom of the prisoners were proceeding, with every prospect of success, the London *Times* in its comments stated that 'the Minister of a certain great republic at Athens, whom a party of his countrymen once consulted as to the safety of making an excursion to Marathon, expressed the hope that they would be captured by brigands, as it might afford him an opportunity to distinguish himself by effecting their release.' Such is among the amenities of official life.

By the way, it was this same influential journal that called this act of brigandage 'a comedietta, a common incident of the spring in Greece,' and suggested that a body of marines from one of the English vessels of war at Malta should be sent in pursuit of the brigand band, a piece of advice which contained in it the only real danger that existed; for had the English Minister at Athens been allowed to carry out the negotiations for the ransom of the prisoners without the intermeddling and threats of his Government and the employment of troops, not a man among the prisoners would have been killed.



In another work\* I have given a full account of this sad affair, and so will not dwell upon it here.

A young gentleman once called upon me to ask 'how soon he could get away from Athens.' He had been there two days only, but these had sufficed him for seeing 'everything worth seeing,' and he was anxious to be off for the next point in his travelling itinerary. He had been told there was no steamer leaving for three days, and it would be 'an awful bore' to lose all that precious time in such a dull city. In point of fact 'Athens was a fraud,' and he wanted to get away from it. I informed him, to his great disgust, that the three days must be endured by him, and expressed my surprise that he had found so little to interest him. Had he been to the Acropolis and the Parthenon; to Eleusis and to Marathon? Had he inspected the grand old ruins in the heart of the city, and visited the University, the public museum, and so forth?

Yes, he said, he had seen them all. As to the Parthenon, twenty minutes had sufficed for that 'broken-down old ruin.' 'I wonder,' he remarked, 'that you don't get tired of this place; but I suppose you have plenty of occupation, and that, of course, makes all the difference.' I told him that I had been many times to the Parthenon, and had never

\* 'The Greeks of To-day.'



yet wearied of the sublimest temple of ancient Greece, and that I learned something every time I revisited it. Did he know anything of Greek history? I inquired, and might I lend him a book or two to help him while away those remaining three days? He thanked me, and took away with him Wordsworth's 'Greece' and another volume. I saw nothing more of my young countryman for several days, and had begun to think I should see neither him nor my borrowed books again. But he finally made his appearance, books in hand, wanting to borrow more on the same subject. The steamer for Constantinople had come and gone, but he was no longer in haste to look at Turkish mosques and bazaars. Wordsworth and Felton had opened his eyes to a new interest in life; invested 'broken-down old ruins' with a deathless charm, and with the touch of a wizard's wand had transformed Athens from a 'fraud' to a historical treasure-house, where he could trace the life of a people who had furnished to future generations the highest examples in art, philosophy, eloquence, and martial prowess. He had been again to Eleusis, revisited the museums at Athens, and had found 'twenty minutes' quite too short a time to contemplate the Parthenon.

Such was the effect of a little light thrown in upon a mind naturally intelligent, but insufficiently in-



structed, as is the case with thousands of our countrymen, and other countrymen, who rush over Europe, guide-book in hand, checking off the places and monuments to which their particular attention is called by an asterisk, but failing to appreciate more than an infinitesimal part of what they came so far to look upon.

When Admiral Farragut visited Athens, while on his celebrated tour round the world in the historic *Franklin*, I took him, among other places of interest, to see the majestic columns of the temple of Jupiter Olympius. They stand in their solitary grandeur on an uninterrupted level plain, piercing the transparent atmosphere—so peculiar to Attica—while beyond them spread to the view the glittering waters of the Ægean Sea. I expected from the old naval hero an exclamation of surprise at the grandeur of the columns, and attributed his silence, as he surveyed them, to the impressive feeling they inspired. He carefully ran his eye up from base to capital, and at last remarked: ‘Yes, they are very fine; but our trees in California are a good deal bigger and taller.’

The Admiral was an American to the backbone, and to institute comparisons showing the superiority of his own land, people, and things over those of Europe was an intense satisfaction to him. When the King of Greece, who was educated as a naval



officer, visited the *Franklin*, and went over the frigate from deck to hold, his Majesty held a conversation with the Admiral as to the relative qualities of wooden vessels and ironclads. 'Give me,' said Farragut, 'a wooden ship. If an iron plate is knocked away by a cannon ball, where are you? Whereas if a hole is made in the hull of the *Franklin*, it can be stopped up in no time.'

The Admiral received a good deal of attention from the King during his visit to Athens. On the day of his arrival there chanced to be a grand official dinner at the palace, and, knowing that his Majesty would wish to have him present, I dispensed with the formal preliminaries usual on occasions of presentation, and took him at once to the palace, where the King received him with marked cordiality, and invited him to the evening's banquet. In honour of his American guest, his Majesty wore a naval uniform, and the Admiral was assigned a seat at table directly in front of the King and Queen. I remember that my colleague the English Minister, who sat next to me, perpetrated one of his ever-ready *bon mots* on that occasion. Mr. Erskine had once said to me that he could not in the least understand the strong sympathy which seemed to exist between the United States and Russia, especially as the political condition of the two countries was diametrically op-



posite. He kept up this joke, if it was one, with the pertinacity of an Englishman whenever occasion offered.

‘Where is your Admiral seated?’ he asked; ‘I do not see him.’

‘Just across the table,’ I replied, ‘on the left of Boutakoff’ (the Russian Admiral).

‘I can’t see him,’ said Erskine, ‘on account of this large vase of flowers; but I see the Russian. *C’est la même chose.*’

At my own table Farragut met Canares, the Greek Minister of Marine, son of the famous old naval hero of the Greek Revolution, whose exploits, including the firing of the Turkish fleet under circumstances of great risk and peril, gave his name a historic renown exceeding even that of the hero of the Mississippi.

When the *Franklin* left the Piræus, a bevy of boats, filled with Cretan refugees, gathered about her, the wives and children shouting ‘*Zeto ! Zeto !*’ at the top of their lungs, and waving their arms to the departing Admiral. They all knew that the old hero and his ship came from that far-off America which had sent them food, clothing, and money to rescue them from starvation and suffering, while their fathers, husbands, and sons were engaged in a bloody struggle at home for their lives and liberties. No doubt many among



them hoped that the victorious commander would do a little practising with his heavy guns upon the Turkish fortifications, as the frigate passed the island of Crete.

Another of our heroes whose visit to Athens attracted a good deal of attention was General Sheridan; and in his case also the King was good enough to waive the preliminary formula, as the General's visit was to be a short one, and he was anxious to dispense with unnecessary ceremony. Sheridan's deeds were familiar to his Majesty, and as he had received the great sailor, so he received the great soldier, with marked cordiality, and during the interview at the palace evinced the interest he felt in his career by asking for certain details of his military campaign on which he desired information. The General replied with that becoming modesty which was one of his chief characteristics. The King expressed to me, afterwards, his surprise at the contrast between Sheridan's small, compact figure and the utter absence of ostentation or vanity, and the grandeur of his military achievements. He was entertained at dinner by the sovereigns, and he subsequently attended one of the large balls at the palace, where he was the object of universal curiosity and attention. In point of fact, from the moment the General entered the spacious ballroom—one of



the finest, by the way, in Europe—both my wife and I had our hands full in meeting the requests on all sides to be presented to the hero of the evening. The Greeks of to-day come from a soldierly stock, as may well be believed by those who are acquainted with the masterly struggle of seven years by a small and inadequately armed body of patriots with the well-trained phalanxes of Turkey, during which the records of valorous deeds and of self-sacrifice on the part of the Greeks find few parallels in history. It was not astonishing, therefore, that the American General was the cynosure of all observers on this occasion, as, indeed, on all occasions when the small man of great deeds appeared in public. What chiefly surprised the Greeks was the unpretending simplicity of Sheridan, both in manners and in dress.

As it is the general custom in Athens, as in other Continental cities in Europe, for military officers, when not on duty, to appear in uniform and side-arms, the Greeks could not quite understand why so distinguished a soldier should walk the streets of Athens in an ordinary civilian's dress without a sign or token of his official rank. At the palace ball he wore on the breast of his uniform the Shenandoah badge, a simple affair scarcely observable among the glittering decorations and gold lace and broad ribbons of the diplomatic body; nor would he have sported



that little trinket, so he said to us, 'if my boys did not always insist upon my wearing it.' The Greeks are very satirical among themselves, and do not spare criticism when opportunity offers. On the morning after the palace ball, one of the newspapers of Athens contrasted the appearance of 'the star-be-spangled and ribbon-ornamented personages present—many of whom were ignorant of the smell of gun-powder—with the American hero of forty battles, in his plain military uniform without a single decoration.'

At my own table Sheridan met several distinguished men, among whom may be mentioned General Sir Richard Church, Generalissimo of the Greek Army—an Englishman by birth—and Colonel Botzaris, son of Marco Botzaris of the Greek Revolution, whose achievements are familiar to all readers of modern Greek history, and whom Halleck has immortalized in verse.

During his visits to our family circle, the General had much to say upon his experiences during the Franco-German War. I remember his remarking that the German commissariat was so well supplied that they could have lined the road from Berlin to Paris with bottles of beer; while the French were very badly off in supplies, clothes, and other necessities for the campaign. The valour of both contend-



ing armies he greatly extolled. He made no allusion to the high military estimate in which—we now know—he himself was held by the German commanders whom he accompanied during the campaign.

Whatever were Sheridan's ideas about the Greeks before his visit to Athens, he had nothing to say but praise for them after his experience with public and private individuals during his sojourn in the Greek capital. He told me that, from the moment he left Vienna, he heard nothing but detraction of the Hellenese. These reports increased in intensity as he passed down the Danube, and they culminated at Constantinople, where he was told that at Athens it would be hazardous for him to go out of his hotel in broad daylight, on account of the prevalence of brigandage in the very streets of the capital. Being a military man, however, who had faced open and secret foes, he stood the hazard of the die, and ventured to land in that classic corner of the world. He asked me, with an expression of astonishment, what it all meant. He found himself in a quiet and beautiful city, with intelligent and polite people about him, and surrounded by evidences of civilization, taste, wealth, and social enjoyment. 'It is true,' he said, 'that I regarded much of what I heard as exaggeration, but where there was so much smoke, I



concluded there must be some fire.' I could only tell him that Constantinople was not precisely the place to obtain correct information concerning its neighbours in Greece, or to ascertain the results of free institutions.

One of the personages just mentioned deserves to be more particularly alluded to—General Church, the brother of the late Dean Church, of St. Paul's, London. No one knew the precise age of the General until his death, and he was put down by the Greeks as anywhere between ninety and a hundred; but everyone knew that he possessed a remarkable constitution. It was always well into winter before he put on his overcoat, and it was his boast that his own drawing-room fire was the last to be lighted in Athens. He was a good swimmer, and long after the bath-houses were closed for the season, the General would go down to the bay at Phalerum, and swim about and beyond limits with the freedom and elasticity of youth. Suddenly these unseasonable aquatic performances ceased, and nobody knew why until the General, pressed for an explanation, informed us that he had been chased by a shark, narrowly escaping with his life.

His imprudent exposures often resulted in temporary illness, and about as often in reports of his death, which were only refuted by his sudden reappearance



in the street, looking as well and as lively as if nothing had happened. But there came at last a day when it was only too true that the old man was prostrated by acute inflammation of the lungs, and that the doctors had given up all hope, at his advanced age, of saving him. Ill news travels apace in Athens, but the report of the General's death had not reached me when I left my house for his to ascertain his condition. On my way I met a group of Greek gentlemen, whose grave countenances and tearful eyes told me the tale more impressively than their words. The dead are buried in Greece within twenty-four hours, and the funeral arrangements were already being discussed by them. They were to be on an imposing scale, worthy of the official position and eminently popular character of the man. It was with sad steps that I resumed my walk to look for the last time upon the features of my friend; and when I reached his house, the open doors and the ominous stillness that hung over all things were sadder still. As I walked softly up the vacant stairs, as men do when approaching the chamber of death, and turned the handle of the door which opened into the familiar drawing-room where so often the General had related to me the events of his old campaigns, my heart sunk with the reflection that his cheerful voice and hearty welcome would



never greet me again. The room wore its wonted aspect—the centre table with its books and English magazines, and the pictures on the walls, some of them portraits of the old Greek heroes, Marco Botzaris, Mavrocordato, Colocotronis, Capodistria, and Canaris. There was but one other person in the room as I entered—a gentleman in a white necktie, standing with his back to the fireplace and his hands in his pockets. Before I recognised who he was, he cried out :

‘Holloa ! *you* here so early. I’m glad to see you.’

It was General Church himself. The shock was so great that I was bereft of speech. Finally, I was able to find words enough to say that, hearing of his severe illness, I had called to ask how he was.

‘Yes,’ he said, ‘this time I’ve had a narrow touch-and-go of it ; but, thank God ! I’m all right again.’

In a few minutes we were seated cross-legged before the fire, the General entertaining me with more of his war reminiscences. Church outwitted the doctors and deferred the ‘grand arrangements’ of the funeral committee for several years longer.

I called one day with Dr. Jonas King, the well-known American missionary, who had resided in Athens for forty years, and knew and was known by everybody, to see the celebrated Maid of Athens.



She was rather a portly lady of about sixty, and without a trace of having been distinguished for her personal beauty. She was dressed in black, and her name was Black. Her daughter was with her, and presented an agreeable contrast in her clearly-defined Greek profile and graceful manners. Our conversation was confined to general topics, with just a passing allusion to her Byronic romance, with the frequent reference to which, on the part of foreign visitors, I thought she must be tremendously bored. I regretted after I had left that I had not ascertained from her one fact on a mooted point—her exact age when the poet addressed to her the famous love-song :

‘ Maid of Athens, ere we part,  
Give, oh give me back my heart,’ etc.

The latest story respecting the origin of the poem is that ‘the maid’ was but twelve years of age at the time, one of two daughters of a Greek lady at whose house Byron was a boarder. Before he left, the little girl, who was a great favourite of his, begged him to write her a poem, upon which he scribbled off-hand the ditty, which has attained, it seems to me, an undeserved immortality.

A few days after my visit to this celebrity, I met Dr. H——, another well-known missionary at Athens, whose theological views and methods were



diametrically opposed to King's, and who never lost an opportunity of taking a harmless shot at his rival. On mentioning to him that I had made this visit under the auspices of Dr. King, he exclaimed: 'Stuff and nonsense! King is always taking people to see Mrs. Black, and insisting upon it that she was the Maid of Athens; but it is not so. It was the *other* sister, and she is dead long ago!'

The 'veritable original,' therefore, seems to be involved in mystery, like many other famous persons and things; such, for instance, as Washington's negro body-servant, who, according to the newspaper notices, used frequently to die—now at New Orleans, now at a Western town, and, after the lapse of a few years more, at some other place. Mark Twain, whose historical accuracy cannot be questioned, records the fact that Columbus died in two distinct houses at Genoa, which was also the case with Virgil at Brindisi, where I paid a fee at each of the two respective buildings where he expired.



## CHAPTER XXII.

## HENRY M. STANLEY AT ATHENS.

I THINK it was in 1870 or 1871—I made no note of the incident—that a card came in to me one morning, at the Legation at Athens, on which was inscribed: ‘H. M. Stanley, Correspondent of the *New York Herald*.’ It was followed by a young man of rather short and compact figure, whose face indicated intelligence and determination of character. This I remember noticing at the time, for he looked earnestly at me and all around with compressed lips, as if he had a serious purpose in view. Invited to take a seat, he settled himself as if for a long conversation, remarking that he had arrived that morning at Athens, and would be pleased to receive from me some information respecting the political condition of the kingdom.

He listened to what I had to communicate on this head in a rather abstracted manner, and soon turned the conversation to the business of the Legation.



My impression from his conversation and manner was that something more than simple curiosity induced his many and personal questions, to which I submitted in good humour, although they resembled an inquisitorial examination exceeding the limits of the average interviewer. As he talked, his attention was divided between scrutinizing my features and taking a mental inventory of the contents of the room we were in. This amused rather than annoyed me.

Having apparently satisfied himself on all points, he asked if he might look over a pile of American newspapers that lay on the table, and in this occupation he appeared to interest himself, while I received a visit from some officers from a man-of-war then lying in the harbour. I observed, however, that Stanley was keeping an ear open to the conversation at our end of the room, and the moment these gentlemen left, he inquired particularly who they were, the object of their visit to Athens, and so forth, and entered their names in his note-book. Then, shaking my hand with marked cordiality, he took leave.

I had almost forgotten his visit, when a few days later he again presented himself, but at a moment when I was occupied, and I begged to be excused. He said he would not detain me long, and had called to make an apology.



‘An apology!’ I asked. ‘For what?’

‘I will explain,’ he said, ‘if you will give me five minutes.’

He had an amusing account to give, which I will curtail. It appeared that the day Stanley arrived at Athens chanced to be one of the numerous *fête* days observed by the Greeks. The buildings were gaily decorated, and the people were in the streets. As the journalist passed through the street of Hermes, the principal business thoroughfare, his attention was attracted by a profuse display of American bunting, small paper flags, and very common woodcuts of Washington, Lincoln, and Grant, which were suspended from the windows, and festooned along the balcony of a rather pretentious building, the basement story of which was occupied by shops.

‘This,’ thought the correspondent of the *Herald*, ‘must be the United States Legation. No other building in Athens would be so distinguished by national decorations. It is an absurd and undignified exhibition, and calculated to bring into ridicule our country and its representative.’ This impression was confirmed by the appearance of several ladies, presumed by him to be Americans, seated on the balcony in full view of the passers-by, dressed in holiday silks, and enjoying themselves in lively conversation.



Stanley was at the moment on the *qui vive* for material—something amusing and piquant—for his weekly ‘sensational,’ and here he had it before him. Back he sped to his hotel, and there filled pages of ‘copy’ with a highly embellished account, headed in capitals, ‘The Way we are represented at Athens,’ in which the unfortunate Minister and his meretricious surroundings were not spared by his caustic pen.

On his way to the post-office to deposit the MS.—alas! how many a slip there may be between the cup and the lip, or between hotels and post-offices!—Stanley met an American resident to whom he expatiated upon the ridiculous exhibition of flags, cheap pictures, and so forth, in front of the Legation. His companion informed him that the building referred to was occupied by a Greek shopkeeper, who, carried away, probably, by his enthusiastic admiration for America, had given vent to it by this absurd display. The United States Legation, he further informed him, was situated in a very different quarter of the city, and he recommended him to go there and inspect its appearance.

Thither the disappointed journalist wended his way, and discovered a comfortable private residence, situated on a quiet boulevard facing the Palais Gardens. There was not even a spread eagle over the door to designate its character, nor any outward



sign to challenge criticism. But the investigating mind of Stanley was not to be satisfied with mere externals, and he decided to have a look at the interior of the mansion, and to analyze the appearance and character of the official within. Thus he explained to me his first visit of inspection, and his second visit of 'apology.' I accepted both in good part, regretting that the popular newspaper of New York should be deprived of a sensational *bonne bouche*.

Some weeks after this incident, Stanley sent me a copy of the *Herald*, in which my attention was called to an article which he had marked with a blue pencil. The article was headed 'Our Representatives Abroad,' in which, with three exceptions, the American diplomatic body in Europe were handled without gloves. Stanley's *amende honorable* consisted in my name being enrolled among the scathless three, for which courtesy I was probably indebted to his sensitive conscience, when he discovered that he had so nearly brought me to the pillory on insufficient evidence.

Several years after this I met Stanley in Paris and London. He was no longer the journalist and the interviewer, but the discoverer and the hero, on his return from his first famous adventures in Africa, and when he was the recipient of distinguished attention wherever he appeared. His manners



always seemed to me—even when being lionized in social circles—to be distinctly modest and unassuming, and his conversation was extremely interesting. He was original in many of his ways, and especially so in his neglect of the conventionalism of dress. At an evening party at Versailles, given expressly in his honour, he appeared in a white flannel suit, whether in ignorance of the requirements of the occasion, or in wilful defiance of them, it is difficult to say. I met him again in London at a social gathering of the members and friends of the Royal Geographical Society, and, but for the presence of a lady on his arm, should have asked him to enlighten me in the matter of a romantic episode at a Greek island. It did not, however, seem an inappropriate moment—although I did not avail myself of it—to congratulate him upon his recently published book, ‘How I Found Livingstone,’ and to suggest that he should follow it up with another, to be entitled ‘How I Found an American Legation.’



## CHAPTER XXIII.

## PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF SCHLIEMANN.

IT was in 1871 that Dr. Henry Schliemann introduced himself to me at Athens, soliciting my official assistance in extricating him from an unforeseen difficulty, a very curious circumstance, which had arisen during his efforts to obtain a Turkish Government *firman* to excavate a certain portion of land—which he was in treaty to purchase for this purpose—situated on the so-called Plain of Troy, adjacent to the Dardanelles. Schliemann had come to the conclusion, after a careful survey of the topography of the country, that the hill called Hissarlik, which formed the north-western corner of Novum Ilium, was the site of the ancient city. Half of this land was owned by Mr. Frank Calvert, then United States Vice-Consul at the Dardanelles. During the negotiations for its purchase by Schliemann—so the story went—the most exaggerated reports reached the Sublime Porte at Constantinople, that the object



the purchaser had in view was to search for buried treasure, which he believed existed in large quantities in that vicinity. In vain was it represented to the ministers that the so-called 'treasure' expected to be revealed was the ruins of an ancient city, and that the individual in search of it was purely and simply an enthusiastic archæologist. The ignorant and prejudiced mind of the Turk refused to be convinced that any man 'would be such a fool' as to devote time, money, and years of research for the sake of digging up useless stones, of no pecuniary value, simply to reveal the existence of a city supposed only to be that of a fabulous and uncertain period in the dark ages. But the idea of 'buried treasure' presented itself as something quite in the light of possibility, and that a foreigner should be anxious and determined to investigate the matter, at his own personal expense, inspired the belief that he must be possessed of absolute knowledge of the fact. Thereupon, the Grand Vizier conceived the 'happy thought' of forestalling the adventurer, and, having ascertained the price offered by Schliemann for the property, his Highness refused to authorize the sale to the foreigner, and bought the land himself. Schliemann, as may be imagined, was in a rage of disappointment at being thus outwitted, and especially by a Turkish official whose rapacity and



ignorance, he foresaw, might defeat his lifelong hopes to accomplish a purpose which was dearer to him than the possession of wealth, health, or long life. He proceeded at once to Constantinople, to confer with the authorities, and, if necessary, with the Sultan himself, in the hope of being able to convince them of the error of their suppositions, and of the sole object he had in view in the steps he had taken. Long and many were the conferences with the Government on the subject. The officials refused to be convinced that there was no hidden motive, even if there was no hidden treasure in the case. Baffled at all points, Schliemann was obliged to content himself with a *firman* to proceed with the excavations on such terms as he could obtain; but here he encountered a series of objections, delays, and chicanery on the part of the authorities, which only those who have had occasion to negotiate with the Ottoman Government can possibly appreciate. It was during this condition of affairs that the distinguished archæologist sought my assistance to further his designs. I could do little for him, as his field of action lay beyond my diplomatic jurisdiction; but what I could, I did do in supplying him with letters to my colleague and to some influential friends at Constantinople, endorsing his professional and personal character, and claiming for him that



consideration and assistance which was due to an American naturalized citizen who was earnestly engaged in the prosecution of one of the noblest pursuits that can occupy an intelligent and scholastic mind. Armed with these letters, Schliemann returned to Constantinople.

After further delay, and no end of official annoyances, he finally succeeded in obtaining his *firman*, which permitted him to make his longed-for excavations, and which resulted, as the world knows, in the discovery of a series of buried towns and fortifications, the lowest, in point of strata, being pronounced by him—a supposition largely supported by the ablest of archæologists—to be the actual city of the Trojans. Among the terms specified in the *firman* with which he was obliged to comply, were that the work was to be prosecuted under the supervision of a body of Turkish guards stationed on the spot, and that half the findings of removable value were to be made over to the Turkish Government.

A little incident occurred during Schliemann's negotiations with the Ministers of the Sublime Porte which amusingly illustrates the characteristic simplicity and impatience of the man. Irritated beyond measure by the dilatory proceedings of the officials with respect to the issuing of the *firman*, Schliemann consulted one of his friends as to the



best course to pursue to expedite matters, and was advised to try *backsheish* upon the Minister of the Interior, to oil the slow-moving machinery of business. But his friend forgot to inform him that such a proceeding requires extreme delicacy, and that the medium for effecting such bribery must always be a confidential and trustworthy personal friend of the official, so that the fact may not obtain publicity. Schliemann, in ignorance of the *modus operandi* in these cases, and innocent of all intention to give offence, followed his natural impulse, and one morning, just before the assembling of the Ministers in the Council-chamber, he walked boldly into the room where the Minister and some of his colleagues were seated at the Council-table, and placing a bag of gold coin in front of the chief official, demanded that the long-delayed *firman* should be at once delivered. As might have been expected, the greatest consternation prevailed. His Excellency, red with rage, rose from his chair and declared that he and his colleagues had received a gross and unjustifiable insult, and that but for the fact that Schliemann had been introduced to the Sublime Porte by a foreign ambassador, severe measures would be taken against him. Pointing to the door, he ordered the intruder instantly to leave his presence, and never to show his face again in that department. As for the *firman*,



he should now put off its delivery to an indefinite period. Poor Schliemann stumbled out an apology, based upon the advice he had received from others and of his ignorance of Turkish customs, and withdrew, appalled at the result of his mistaken notions of Oriental diplomacy. Eventually, but not for several weeks after this unfortunate proceeding, the document permitting the excavations to be made was delivered into his hands.

It was always interesting to visit Schliemann at his residence in Athens, where he had built a house and established his home. The lower floor of the building was converted into a museum where were arranged in presentable order his extensive collections of findings from Troy and Mycenæ. To point out and expatiate upon these invaluable relics was his great delight, and he handled each article and described each detail connected with the discovery as if no subject on earth was of greater importance and interest. I have in my possession a simple little object discovered in 'the palace of King Priam'—a terra-cotta 'whorl' without ornamentation, which he presented to me as a memorial of my visit, as if he were parting, like a miser, with a precious and inestimable gem. He related many incidents of interest connected with his researches at Hissarlik, and the deceptions he was often obliged to practise



when dividing, according to the terms of his contract with the Turkish Government, the objects discovered. Availing himself of the ignorance of the men composing the Turkish guard, who carefully watched all his proceedings, he succeeded not infrequently in passing upon them an object not worth preservation, and retaining for himself a less pretentious, but in reality an intrinsically valuable, finding, which he was determined to secure. Thus, on one occasion, when two slabs of inscribed stone—one decidedly modern, the other of unquestionable antiquity—were set aside for distribution, Schliemann expressed so much anxiety to retain the former that the Turks were completely deceived, and vehemently demanded the larger and worthless object, and the apparently reluctant archæologist was forced to content himself with the one he so ardently desired.

Personally, Schliemann did not look the scholar and the *savant* that he was. His face was rather plebeian, and he spoke with a slovenly accent, as if uncultivated and unrefined; but as he conversed, it became evident that his command of different languages, and his thorough acquaintance with the subjects he discussed, were the result of indefatigable study and research. His intense self-confidence, united with his exaggerated enthusiasm, provoked a good deal of ridicule; and his obstinate belief that



things were actually what he simply wished them to be frequently led to the opinion—an unjust one—that he was something of a charlatan. It was his enthusiasm only which was at fault, and but for this marked peculiarity in his mental organism, the world would have been deprived of the important results of his, so to speak, quixotic spirit of adventure in the field of archæological research. When, for example, he dug up an antique vase on the island of Ithaca, he did not assume that by possibility it might have belonged to the household effects of Ulysses, but he at once pronounced the object to be the ‘vase of Penelope.’ The gold mask discovered by him in the ancient tomb at Mycenæ, he, with equal sincerity and absoluteness, declared to be the covering from the dead face of King Agamemnon, and so on. This dogged credulity, this belief in the reality of things which in the general mind only excite speculation, applied equally to his classical readings, and permeated his entire life. When he contemplated a second marriage, he determined to marry only a Greek, and he is said to have made it a condition that the maiden who would espouse him must know her Homer by heart, or at least be able to quote from the ‘Iliad’ and the ‘Odyssey’ with facility. Such a wife he was fortunate enough to find in the daughter of a tradesman of Athens, a woman of cultivated mind



and pleasing address, who in process of time learned to appreciate the high aims of her husband, and to assist him in a remarkable degree in his labours and researches. So well did she understand the peculiar traits of her husband's character, and so thoroughly did she assimilate her disposition and life with his, that she learned to meet his vagaries with a guiding influence, and to lessen his asperities of temperament. An excessively nervous man, now elated with undue excitement, now depressed with temporary disappointment, Schliemann found in his wife just the influence which he required to restore his mind to a wholesome and common-sense view of things. He was at one time prosecuting his work during her absence, in the midst of which he fell ill, and apprehending a serious, if not fatal, result, telegraphed repeatedly for her to join him without delay. To these messages she paid no attention, knowing—as she explained to me—how frequently these alarms occurred, owing to his excessive nervousness, and having ascertained that no actual danger existed, she decided not to humour his ideas by telegraphic correspondence. She was right, for in a few days came a letter from him reporting progress in his work, and without a single allusion to his illness, which apparently he had quite forgotten.

I met Schliemann one day on board a steamer in



the Gulf of Corinth. He was pacing the deck apart from the other passengers, absorbed in perusing a book. I asked him what he was reading.

‘An account of the naval engagement,’ he replied; and went on with his reading.

He seemed to think that ‘*the* naval engagement’ was all that it was necessary to explain, and I was left to my conjectures to determine whether he was interesting himself with an account of the Battle of Trafalgar or some other modern achievement. Soon after, he came up to me, as I was seated some distance from him on the main deck, in an excited manner, and exclaimed:

‘What a wonderful man he was, was he not?’

‘Who was?’ I asked.

‘Why, Themistocles. What foresight! what astonishing power of conception and adaptation to circumstances!’

He was reading from the original Greek the account of the Battle of Salamis, and was as much excited by it as if for the first time in his life he had become acquainted with a historical fact, with which he was really as familiar as a child with his A B C. This was no affectation on his part. Taking little interest in modern literature, his *vade mecum* was a volume of ancient Greek history, which he always carried about with him as a *dévo*t carries about the



familiar, but ever to be read and re-read, missal of his Church. To his mind the past was an ever-present reality, and he revelled in all that was secured by history, and yet was capable of new and increasing revelations of interest and beauty. He 'realized the dream of his life' when at last he found himself actually engaged in excavating the 'sacred soil' of the Peloponnesus and the Trojan; and from that day forward all that was connected with ancient Greece was transplanted into his daily life and affections. He named his children by his second marriage Agamemnon and Andromache, and his ambition was that the former should pursue the archæological researches commenced by his father, and that both should keep up a vital interest in all that is connected with the history of ancient Greece.

At one period during my intercourse with Schliemann, doubts were expressed in many quarters as to his ever having been duly recognised as a naturalized American citizen. He was charged with being a German subject, and claiming, only when his personal interests were subserved thereby, the protection of the United States Government as one of its citizens. It was under these circumstances that he wrote me a long letter, in which occurs the following passage :

'If you have friends in New York, pray, in the name of holy truth, write them to inquire at the



Court of Common Pleas for the city and county of N. Y., whether I have not taken out my papers of citizenship on the 29th of March, 1869. I was a citizen long before, but had not taken out my papers. By the book I send you to-day ("La Chine et la Japan"), I beg you to see that already, as far back as 1865, the U.S. Consul at Yokohama acted for me, and I lived at Yeddo in the U.S. Minister's house.'

In the last page of his autobiography, published in 1880, Schliemann wrote: 'My large collections of Trojan antiquities have a value which cannot be calculated, but they shall never be sold. If I do not present them in my lifetime, they shall, at all events, pass, in virtue of my last will, to the museum of the nation I love and esteem most.'

This promise excited curiosity and expectation in various quarters. 'Which was the nation that Schliemann loved and esteemed the most?' Was it England, where he published his book; or Germany, where he was born and first struggled into fame; or the United States of America, where he became, from choice, a naturalized citizen? Although German statesmen and *savants* endeavoured to elicit a definite answer from him, and urged the claims of that country with earnest persistence, Schliemann would not commit himself, and possibly had not at that time fully made up his mind upon the matter. But later on a circumstance occurred which made me the recipient of his confidence.



As a recognised American citizen, Dr. Schliemann applied to me to further his views with the Government at Washington in obtaining the appointment of United States Consul at a Greek port. He represented to me that he sought only the honour and political advantages derivable from that position, and would dispense with the salary, if by so doing his chances of success would be promoted. Furthermore, he desired that it might be brought to the knowledge of the Government that he intended to bequeath to the *United States* at his death his magnificent collection of Trojan antiquities.

With that curious mixture of simplicity and cunning to which I have before adverted, Schliemann supposed that this really noble offer to the State would induce his immediate appointment to office. I, of course, advised him to avoid all references to what, on the face of it, would be regarded as a bribe, and militate against his interests. At the same time I expressed my willingness to convey, through unofficial channels, the expression of his intentions with regard to the ultimate disposition of the antiquities in his possession. The result was that Schliemann pursued his office-seeking in the usual way, assisted by his political friends at Washington. I had supposed, and so had the authorities at the Department of State, that the applicant for this consulate was fully aware that the post was not



at the time in existence; it was only in contemplation, and its establishment depended upon a special Act of Congress. It appeared, however, that Schliemann was in ignorance of this fact, and when officially notified that it would be inconvenient at that time to consider his application, he took the matter in high dudgeon, and in his mortification and anger at the result of his efforts, he determined to change the destination of his collection and revenge himself upon his 'ungrateful country' by presenting it to the Government of his native land, Germany. When too late to remedy the blunder, the facts of the case were brought to my attention. I wrote to Schliemann regretting his hasty conclusions, and expressing the hope that his patriotic intentions with respect to the collection might yet be carried out. Although convinced of his mistake, it appeared that the step taken could not be recalled. This was one of many instances—notably that of the offer of *backsheish* to the Turkish Minister—where the impetuosity of this distinguished archæologist seriously interfered with his good intentions.

Such a man, notwithstanding his inequalities of character, is not readily to be found in the field of investigation which he so ably occupied, and we may fairly claim for him a prominent place in the gallery of historic worthies.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

## LIFE AT COURT.

KING GEORGE of Greece is what might be termed a mild prince, which by no means signifies a weak one. Brought up in the navy, and without the most distant expectations of ascending a throne, he acquired that frank, genial demeanour which instantly inspires confidence and affectionate regard. He possesses a strong personal will that asserts itself without unpleasant demonstration. Simple in his tastes, he appreciates his position, and maintains it with becoming dignity. 'C'est mon sort,' as he once said to me; and, unlike his predecessor, Otho of Bavaria, he adapts himself to the wants and aspirations of his people, by whom he is respected and loved. Among other excellent traits of his character which I had the opportunity of observing were his aptitude and decision when repelling unreasonable demands in matters of public policy. When on one occasion a Foreign Minister employed an innuendo



reflecting upon the Greek Government, his Majesty asked him abruptly: 'Does your Government recognise Greece as a kingdom? Well, then, treat her as such;' and the abashed diplomatist held his peace. To one of his Prime Ministers who was urging him to a course of action which did not meet with the King's approval, the latter remarked that the argument the Minister employed was totally inconsistent with the views he had himself expressed on a former occasion. The latter denied the fact. His Majesty went to his desk, and taking from a private drawer a note-book in which it was his habit to record with exactitude every conversation held with official personages on important matters, he bade the astonished Minister read his own words.

The King had learned a valuable lesson from the deficiencies of his predecessor, King Otho of Bavaria, who in many respects was the pliant tool of the foreign ministers at his Court. It was a constant struggle between at least three of the representatives of the foreign Powers to obtain the ear of the Sovereign, and secure political supremacy each over the other. It followed that the King was the helpless instrument, now of one, now of the other, according to the diplomatic astuteness of the respective rivals. King George adopted the clever expedient of never consulting the ambassadors



separately when in matters of international interest he had made up his mind to adopt a course of action in which he anticipated a divergence of opinion. In such cases he consulted the ministers in a body, and, hoping for their joint approval, laid the matter before them. As a rule they acquiesced, for in each other's presence there was no opportunity for asserting individual supremacy. Although a rigid disciplinarian in matters of Court etiquette, the King treats his personal friends as equals, and detests humbug. At the palace no detail in the household arrangements escapes his observation ; and although lenient to all, from *aide-de-camp* to the meanest valet, he will not suffer imposition on the part of purveyor or servant. Noticing one day at table that the salad was of inferior quality, he sent to the *chef* for a detailed account of his expenditure, and discovered that he was being enormously overcharged for the palace supplies. Without warning, his Majesty made his appearance in the kitchen, and, to the consternation of the *cordons bleus* and his army of cooks, proceeded to a personal inspection of matters. The result was that that functionary retired from the royal service, and eventually started a hotel in Paris, presumably on the capital he had accumulated at Athens in his *salad* days.

As to Queen Olga, in venturing to allude to her



personal charms, as I knew her at Athens, I must limit my pen to the simple statement that she was lovely to look upon. Daughter of the Grand-Duke Constantine, and cousin to the late Emperor of Russia, she possessed that early development of *physique* so characteristic of her countrywomen, which made her a fitting and charming bride at the age of seventeen. Artless, yet possessing much natural sagacity and shrewdness of observation, she is humorous in conversation and exemplary in prudent reserve.

As the King has improved upon his predecessor in gaining the sympathies of his subjects, so the Queen has delighted the people by surrounding the former barren steps of the throne with flowers of royalty. She has had seven children, three of whom I have seen held up like naked cupids by the Metropolitan Archbishop before being immersed three times, after the manner of the Greek Church, in the baptismal font. This ceremony, which in the case of royal infants takes place in the Metropolitan Church, accompanied by all the pomp and pageantry of sacerdotal surroundings, is unique and interesting to those who witness it for the first time. On the occasion of the christening of the Princess Royal, the third child born, his Majesty, who is a Protestant, and was accustomed to the simple ceremony of the



Lutheran Church, said to me: 'Never did I expect to see a daughter of mine held up nude before the congregation!'

The Queen's chief happiness was in the society of her husband and children. 'Would you like to see a picture?' she one day asked, and conducted me to the bedroom adjoining the nursery. There, on the silken coverlet of an immense bed, lay the three royal babies taking their mid-day nap. In their previous frolic they had tumbled themselves nearly naked, and now lay in profound slumber, a confused group of plump little rosy limbs and faces, commingling with a grace of posture which only Nature can bestow. It was indeed a 'picture,' and one that would have delighted the eyes of an artist of *genre*.

The visits of foreign sovereigns and other royal personages to the Court at Athens kept the palace gay with balls and banquets for the greater part of the winters. They were always enjoyable, as these occasions bring the members of the diplomatic body into personal acquaintance with a class of men who rule the destinies of Europe. But these festivities are often fatiguing, especially when night after night the etiquette of the occasion requires the attendance of the Minister for five or six consecutive hours, during which he may be unexpectedly called upon to present



himself to an illustrious visitor, or to dance with the Queen, or to accompany some *grande dame* to the supper-table. For the most part the conversations with sovereigns are but the exchange of commonplace civilities, and seldom lead to observations worthy of record. Politics, the most interesting of all topics on such occasions, are carefully avoided, and the compliments paid to one's country by royal lips do not make a very deep impression. Occasionally, however, a jest or a passing remark meant much more than it expressed, and even an Emperor on one occasion, in private conversation at a palace party, conveyed a hint which was of no little political value to the person addressed.

The magnificent climate of Attica, and the beautiful foliage in the neighbourhood of Athens, chiefly olive-trees displaying varying tints of delicate green, make country excursions exceedingly attractive. I have passed four successive winters when scarcely a drop of rain fell from October to June, and the sky was a sheet of continuous cloudless blue. In the spring nothing is more exquisite than the transparent atmosphere through which the undulating chain of far-off mountains stand out clear and distinct in their graceful outlines, robbed of half their distance. It was on one of these delightful mornings that the King proposed to drive me, four-in-hand, to Tatoï—a



wooded estate on the slopes of Mount Parnes, which he had recently purchased—some three hours' drive from Athens. Finally, he decided to make up a picnic-party, consisting of the Court circle and the members of the diplomatic body, so that we left the palace in a long file of carriages. The King, who is an admirable whip, soon out-distanced those behind us as we sped along the road with a noble team of horses. His Majesty had a stud of forty in his stable, and the ones attached to our open waggon being newly purchased, he took the opportunity of testing their speed. They proved equal to the occasion, and we arrived at Tatoï far in advance of the rest of the party. When all were assembled we sat down to lunch, *al fresco*, in a grove of noble cedars and pines, the ground being covered with a fragrant carpet of pine-needles, upon which the cones had fallen in great profusion. As the party strolled through the grove after lunch, with their cigars and small-talk—the Queen and ladies gathering in groups near by—a gentleman, either by design or accident, sent a pine-cone flying through the air with such precision and force that it struck, of all men, a very dignified and old-fashioned diplomatist in the hollow of his back. He looked around, with rage in his aspect, to discover the author of the insult or accident, as the case might be; but the others, suppressing their merri-



ment, looked so grave and unconscious that the old gentleman failed to detect his assailant. Thereupon, with genuine diplomacy, he stooped to conquer, and picking up the missile, sent it spinning through the air to hit where it might. As it whizzed past my own ears, I considered myself the challenged party, and picking up a shining cone, fired away indiscriminately at a group some distance off, and had the misfortune to draw a drop of imperial blood from the lips of the most distinguished lady present, who chanced to be standing within range of the shot. So far from her Majesty being offended, without waiting for my apology she picked up, not one cone, but handfuls from the ground, and revenged herself by pelting the whole company. This was the signal for a general scrimmage, and the game of romps went on for a good half-hour, until exhausted nature had to yield to a less boisterous pastime. It was amusing and edifying to see the wonderful effect of natural mirth upon the trained and sedate *aides-de-camp* and *dames d'honneur*, a class of personages who, so far as I have observed them in various parts of the world, appear to lose their identity in speechless and abashed awe when in the presence of the sovereigns whose satellites they are. Before they could pause to consider whether their official dignity would not be hopelessly compromised by joining in



the fun, they found themselves the chief actors in it, pelting, and in some cases wounding each other, to say nothing of the disarray of their costumes by the vigour with which they kept up the mimic 'battle of the cones.' As to the stiff-backed ambassador, who had probably never before unbent in presence of a sovereign or a colleague, his spinal exercise proved so beneficial that from that day forward he was a changed man. He knew that having once thrown his hauteur, with his pine-cones, to the winds, it would never be forgotten, and wisely taking the lesson to heart, that solemnity and pomposity are not necessarily evidences of diplomatic *finesse*, he became one of the most sociable and agreeable men in the diplomatic body.

But it was under the cooler atmosphere, and surrounded by the lovely scenery of the island of Corfu—where their Majesties passed a portion of each summer—that the Court circle enjoyed an unrestrained season of charming repose. Especially was the change appreciated by the King, who in his beautiful villa a few miles out of the town of Corfu—and which was appropriately named *Mon Repos*—enjoyed to the utmost a period of relaxation from the political and harassing occupations incident to his position as Sovereign. Not infrequently those of the diplomatic body who accompanied the Court



thither were invited to breakfast and dine *en famille* with their Majesties, and to excursions and picnics in the neighbourhood, which latter were especially attractive from the necessity imposed upon each to contribute to the general amusement. As most of my colleagues took advantage of the excessive heat, during midsummer, to absent themselves from Greece, I was sometimes the only companion of the King outside the Court circle, and he would send for me to join him in an afternoon's ride on horseback, or in boating on the placid blue waters of the bay. His Majesty was as good a horseman as a whip, and would dash up a rugged and precipitous hillside where there was no saddle-path with ease and dignity, often in places where my own horse was glad enough to descend to the level road again. He had a great variety of boats, and once in my curiosity to try a water-velocipede—then a great novelty—I cut a very sorry figure. Having propelled myself in a straight line towards the opposite Albanian coast, I found it, for some time, impossible to turn the machine round to regain the shore, the crank being rusty. There I lay alone on the broad expanse of water, resembling, and much in the 'fix' of, a half-drowned grasshopper. Looking back, I perceived the King, who had been pulling himself about in a wherry, at a considerable distance behind me, lying



on his oars and convulsed with laughter at my discomfiture. As this did not improve matters, his Majesty decided to come to my assistance, and, pulling his oars vigorously, had got within hailing distance, when, resolved not to be assisted, I made a supreme effort and got the machine about. Like an arrow I shot past him in triumph, and reached the shore in safety.

Such are among the trivialities which in Court, as in common life, contribute to make up the sum of existence. But I cannot refer to the King and Queen of Greece without acknowledging the unvarying kindness and hospitality extended by them to me and my family during my official residence in that country, and which has extended from that day to this. In my case, at least, the proverb, 'Put not your faith in princes,' has proved unfounded.

On the evening preceding my final departure from Greece—my family having left before me while I remained to assist at the installation of my successor—their Majesties got up a little entertainment for my benefit. It commenced with a dinner at the palace, at which were present the mother of the King—the Queen of Denmark—and his sister, the Princess Thyra, now the Duchess of Cumberland. The dinner over, we proceeded to the theatre. The performance was a long one, and at twelve o'clock,



the play still going on, his Majesty informed me that he had ordered a supper to be served for us in the King's Room contiguous to the royal box. It had been arranged with exceeding taste, and the table, at which the servants from the palace waited, was a glitter of light and covered with delicacies. After the serving of the first courses the servants retired, and we were left to unrestrained discourse and merriment. When we left the theatre the performances on the stage had long been over, the lights in the body of the house extinguished, and the auditorium, as we passed it, was a dark and empty void.



## CHAPTER XXV.

## DELOS.

DURING the last year of my residence in Greece, I was detained by official occupations well into mid-summer, and was at last so run down by the debilitating atmosphere that my doctor recommended a sea-trip. I decided to make a flying visit to Constantinople, a city I had not yet visited, and embarked in a Messagerie steamer. It was a very old and very small boat, substituted at the eleventh hour for the regular steamer, which had come into port in a disabled condition.

This little sea-trip is memorable to me, for—although an old sailor, having crossed the Atlantic some forty times and traversed the Southern Seas to and from China—I had never experienced so heavy a blow under such miserable conditions. The boat was overcrowded with second-class passengers—Greeks, Turks, Armenians, and Jews—packed like herrings amidships in their parti-coloured costumes,



yelling, groaning, sobbing, snoring, as they lay jammed together in the limited space, and drenched by the waves which broke over the gunwale. The strangest thing of all was that I proved to be the only individual on board who was not afflicted with *mal de mer*, the rest being either downright sick or suffering in various degrees from nausea. As to myself, no sooner had we rounded Cape Sunium than the invigorating air of the Greek archipelago restored me to my normal condition of good health, and I surveyed the scene around me—which was much like that described in Thackeray's 'White Squall'—with the greatest composure. *Our* captain, however, who, pale and woe-begone, could scarcely issue his orders, was in a condition quite the reverse of Thackeray's

‘Captain Lewis,  
Who calmly stood and blew his  
Cigar in all the bustle,  
And scorned the tempest's tussle ;  
\*       \*       \*       \*       \*  
And as the tempest caught her,  
Cried, “George, some brandy and water !”’

If anything could have added to the distress of the sufferers, it must have been the sight of me, standing by the mizzen-mast, holding on with one hand to the halyards, smoking cigarette after cigarette, incapable of appreciating the horrors of their physical condi-



tion. In this position I remained waiting impatiently for the dinner-bell to ring. But no bell rang. At last, urged by a keen appetite to know the reason why, I descended to the cabin. The cabin was deserted, and not even the tablecloth was laid. I shouted for the steward, but no voice came in reply, so I went in search of him. I found the poor fellow stretched at full length on the pantry floor, and so far from being in a condition to bring up the dinner, was bringing up his own last repast in a manner not at all calculated to increase my own appetite for food.

‘What does this mean?’ I exclaimed. ‘Are we to have no dinner to-day?’

‘Dinner!’ he replied, staring at me as if I had lost my senses. ‘*Mon Dieu, monsieur*, why are you not in bed like all the rest of the passengers? Do you not know that the captain is *malade*, the crew *malade*, the cook *malade*, the waiters *malade*, and I, as you see, *malade*?’ emphasizing the last statement by a performance which left no doubt upon my mind of its accuracy. Luckily I found a cold chicken and a bottle of ale in the larder, and so did very well for myself.

On my arrival in Constantinople, I was taken in charge by my hospitable colleague at the American Legation, and, much against my wishes, submitted



to a series of official presentations, which seriously interfered with my first few days of sight-seeing. Among other arrangements, a day was appointed for my presentation to the Sultan Ábdul-Áziz; but before the day arrived it was rumoured that, in consequence of an outbreak of cholera in the Turkish provinces, the Greek Government were about to impose quarantine upon all passengers arriving from Turkey. To avoid this infliction, I returned to Greece by the first steamer. We were too late. As we came to anchor off Syra, a Government official came alongside with the dreaded decree in his hand, and 'all passengers for Greece' were ordered to be landed at the quarantine-ground on the island of Delos, there to remain for eleven days in durance vile until expurgated from all suspicion of infection.

Some efforts were made by the commander of the Austrian steamer to obtain exemption for myself and another 'exceptional' passenger; but recognising the irregularity and probable futility of such a proceeding, I objected to keep the steamer in waiting for the Nomarch's reply, and accepted my fate with the rest. And a hard fate it was; for not only is Delos an absolutely desert island, but the quarantine arrangements not having been completed, we, thirty or forty of us, were abominably housed in the one-storied empty buildings which formed the only habitations



on the island, and which were little better than cow-houses. The one allotted to myself and five other passengers of the first-class, whom I was courteously requested by the officials to select as my companions, was by far the best building of the group. It was of rough stone, the interior being divided into two compartments, for the accommodation of the two sexes. Along one side of each extended a platform of boards, upon which the victims were expected to sleep, without mattress or covering but their own travelling-rugs. Not an article of furniture, chair, table, or eating utensil, was visible. Stay! I am inexact, and when I cease to be exact may I never have a reader. There *was* an implement—a four-pronged wooden fork, discoloured and pointless, left by the quarantine unfortunates of many years before, which my servant exhumed from a dark corner while searching in the cracks and crevices for black-beetles. From the venerable and worn appearance of this relic, I was at first inclined to attribute it to the Pelasgian period, but one of the company—who must have been a Scotchman—seriously assured me that a wooden utensil could not have existed during successive centuries, and, moreover, that forks were not introduced until the fifteenth century. I was thus deprived of this small crumb of antiquarian comfort.



The quarantine 'doctor,' by courtesy so called—for I doubt if he had ever perused a medical work or attended a clinical lecture—bustled about with an air of good intentions, but could have done nothing for our physical relief in case of illness, as not a pill, plaster, or draught was to be found in the medical chest. He smiled with benevolent satisfaction when he surveyed our apartment—six metres by four—and declared that we were extremely well off with but six occupants, as it was intended for twenty. My companions consisted of a French contractor for the Isthmus of Corinth, a sub-editor of an English journal published in Constantinople, a German, a Greek, and a Turk, the latter an *aide-de-camp* of the Pasha of Crete. This official had in charge a large basket of grapes intended for his Highness the Pasha, but which delicacy, as may be supposed, never reached the lips of that august personage. Indeed, but for this timely addition to our first day's meal, we should have had nothing to eat but a loaf of coarse brown bread, washed down with the sour resined wine of the country. It was pitiable to think of the sufferings of the poor second-class passengers, stowed like cattle in pens, many of whom had not a copper piastre to pay for the bread they stood in need of.

The next day our condition improved, for boat-



loads of provisions came over from Syra, brought by the peddlers in such articles, who demanded some 500 per cent. profit for what they sold to those who had money to purchase. Personally I had little to complain of, and much to be grateful for, since no sooner was it known in Syra that a foreign Minister was confined in quarantine, than offerings in the shape of cooked and uncooked meat, including a live lamb and three white pigeons, vegetables, pastry, fruit, and jellies, were sent to 'his Excellency' in such profusion that my own party and many of the outside sufferers were supplied therefrom. I never had more substantial proofs of what Greek hospitality is capable of than on that dreary island of Delos. The contributors to my comfort were not only personal friends, but the cards that accompanied the gifts were in many instances inscribed by names entirely unknown to me, while others were sent anonymously. My colleagues at Athens did not forget me, nor did the Greek officials, especially the Nomarch of Syra, who came down to the island in person, not only to look after my condition, but to promise a special steamer to carry me back the very hour the term of our confinement ended. Last, but not least, the ladies of Syra contributed baskets and bouquets of flowers, whose fragrance was not wasted on *that* desert air.



The day we killed and cooked our lamb we turned into a veritable feast-day, distributing the savoury dish among the entire company. Half the animal was cooked after the *palicar* fashion,' a long stick serving as a spit over a bed of coals in the open air. Monsieur Piat, the French engineer made a *sauté* of the kidneys with a gastronomic skill worthy of the *chef* of his Majesty the King.

It was not without a certain emotion that I found myself standing upon the sacred soil of Delos, a spot not included in the ordinary itinerary of travel, and visited only—at the time I speak of—at rare intervals by a few enthusiastic pilgrims in search of archæological 'findings,' which they found not. An hour's survey of the dreary waste was sufficient to do away with the associations of centuries, and to reduce the glamour of pagan superstition to a dead waste of depressing reality. Not a tree, not a shrub, not a blade of grass, broke the broad expanse of tawny sand and gravel as our melancholy group of passengers stood day after day behind the cordon of ropes extended to define the 'infected district' from the space allotted to the officials and employés, gazing hopelessly upon the sea-girt isle beneath the pitiless blaze of an August sun. As fresh arrivals of passengers by Constantinople steamers occurred, new limits were assigned to each, no communication being allowed



between the respective companies, so that the quarantine-ground resembled a cattle fair, where each group of animals is kept apart by the ropes or fences which hem them in. The only diversion afforded was when the daily mail arrived from Syra bringing letters for such of us as were favoured in this way; our own letters, in return, being received across the line in a pair of tongs, and fumigated by burning sulphur, as if direct communications from the infernal regions. When our reading and the chit-chat derived therefrom was exhausted, there remained nothing for us to do but to retire to our respective cabins to escape from the broiling heat until after sundown, when a stroll within limits afforded all the exercise we could obtain, or a dip in the sea refreshed us before turning in for the night.

Delos, as we know, was formerly a floating island fixed to the bottom of the sea by Zeus that Apollo and Diana might be born therein, and daily worshipped by mankind. The worship has been annihilated by the centuries, but Phœbus and Diana still survey the island, and seem to take delight in exposing to its enforced visitors the barren desolation and desecration of these degenerate days. The gods were ever revengeful, and it must be to them a source of satisfaction to repay humanity for its neglect by witnessing the horrors of the quarantine



on the spot where majestic temples and hallowed rites once made the scene glorious to its pilgrim worshippers. If the rays of the August sun by day scourged us, as with burning lashes, for the hypocrisy of half the religions of our time, the calm and sinister face of the moon by night seemed to deride us for turning away from her worship to the cold speculative philosophy of modern reformers.

As the days of our monotonous exile went by, I yearned for some diversion beside strolls within guarded lines and dips in the sea, and it occurred to me that an archæological exploration of the island would be an inestimable relief. Permission for such an exploit was not easily obtained, for our guardians were not to be bribed, or won over by sympathetic appeals, although I brought both influences to bear upon the superintendent in private conversations with him. Finally, I applied, through a messenger, to the Nomarch of Syra, who had shown a disposition to do anything for my comfort, representing that not a single case of illness existed on the island, and that my movements would be conducted with secrecy and prudence. He promptly sent the desired permission, allowing me, 'with not more than two companions,' to extend my walks over both islands, 'Great' and 'Little Delos.'

Accordingly, we set off soon after sunrise one



morning, armed with umbrellas, spades, and a pick-axe, and so quietly that our absence was not noticed by those we left behind until later in the day. From the larger to the smaller island—all that was to be seen of interest being on the latter—we crossed by row-boat, and soon found ourselves surrounded by fragments of marble blocks and columns, the mere refuse of temples, without carving or inscription, which indicated that everything of architectural or archæological value upon the surface of the soil had long since been removed by generations of explorers. ‘The temple’ and ‘the amphitheatre’—sounding names, and promising, as we approached the site, some reward for our hot day’s walk—were barren of interest, time, and the purloiners of art, having left them but the mockery of a name. Through the burning sand and gravel we stumbled over scattered and half-buried fragments, occasionally disturbing vipers and lizards, no doubt the descendants of those which Tournefort mentions in his account of the island in 1717. ‘Never,’ he says, ‘was isle more eulogized for its magnificence than that which is now the retreat of corsairs and bandits.’ Fortunately, the descendants of the Greek outlaws, who during the Turkish conquest of Greece found refuge on these islands, became honest citizens under the civilizing influences of free institutions.



At last we mounted an eminence to the site of an ancient necropolis—how ancient I have not ascertained—which revived our hopes that, where ‘Delos rose and Phœbus sprung,’ something in the way of a relic worth preservation might be discovered; but the tombs, or more properly graves, had long ago been emptied of their contents. One we found which from external appearance seemed never to have been tampered with, and it was with no little excitement that we proceeded with pickaxe and spades to clear away and raise from its position an immense slab of roughly-hewn stone that covered the vault beneath it. It required our united efforts to lift it, and when at last it toppled over, shaking the earth around as if in horror at this work of desecration, and we gazed with keen curiosity into the stone-walled depth below, we discovered, instead of the bones of oracular priests, *nothing*. Not a vestige, not a particle of the dust of humanity, rewarded us for our patient and perspiring toil. It was a case of ‘Hark from the tombs a doleful sound,’ but the doleful sound was the echo of our own groan of disappointment.

I believe that the day when we engaged in this unusual occupation was that on which, had I remained in Constantinople, I should have been presented to the Sultan, and been served with fragrant mocha in cups of delicate porcelain, and inhaled the



fumes of *Latakia* through amber-tipped pipes incrustated with precious gems. Alas! thought I, as I stood over the empty tomb, this is indeed a change from gay to *grave*.

But the day had not been without its compensating blessings; we had been *occupied*, a sensation which redeemed the weary hours of quarantine confinement and diverted our minds from the monotony of exile.\*

The wind and sea had risen suddenly before we took boat again for the lazaretto, and we had some difficulty, with a single pair of oars, in effecting a safe passage. I must say that the temptation was strong within us, having had a taste of freedom, to make straight for the island of Syra and escape further bondage; and I am quite sure that, had we done so, the kind-hearted Nomarch would have winked at our escapade; but there is 'honour' among victims of quarantine as among thieves, and no one broached the idea.

Love is ubiquitous, and the propinquity enforced by a lazaretto stimulates the tender passion. There were two chance passengers of opposite sexes—until then unacquainted with each other—among our

\* Twenty years after our visit a systematic exploration of the island of Delos by the French Archæological School in Greece resulted in some interesting discoveries in deep excavations in the vicinity of the site of the great temples. The work will now be continued with vigour.



company, who out of their mutual misery created an elysium of illusion. It had amused us to watch the ripening passion as well as their unsuccessful attempts to indulge it away from impertinent observers. One warm night, clothed only with the silvery robe of the moonlight, I was standing on a secluded rock that jutted into the sea, and was just on the point of taking a 'header' into my accustomed bath, when, to my surprise, I heard voices, low and sweet, in the shadow of the rock behind me. They were the two lovers, who, confident of being undisturbed, were, under the matronizing protection of Diana, interchanging vows of fidelity, emphasized by mutual endearments. When the naked fact of my presence on the rock above brought them back to the world of reality, they fled in dismay—as did their ancestors from *their* paradise—having discovered that 'life is not an empty dream, and things are not what they seem.'

When at last the eleventh day of our captivity arrived, and the smoke of the Government steamer—sent by the authorities of Syra for the Minister—was perceived, the sense of approaching relief to the little colony was like that which criminals may be supposed to experience when the prison-gates are opened for their deliverance, but with this distinction, that the culprit must be conscious of having deserved his fate, a compensation of which the innocent



traveller, suddenly stopped in his progress and forcibly condemned to days of semi-barbarous confinement, is bereft.

A separate steamer, intended for the rest of the party, was to arrive later in the day ; but the favoured passenger refused to depart without his companions, who, at his invitation, scrambled into the Government boat with exclamations of delight.

On my arrival at Syra, and subsequently at Athens, I was greeted with such cordiality by sympathizing friends that the reception largely atoned for the hardships of the preceding days. To the English Minister at Athens—then Mr. Stewart—I found myself indebted for having employed every effort with the Government to shorten the period of my captivity ; but, and very properly, without avail.

What greatly annoyed me was to find that, during my detention at Delos, Mr. Seward had arrived at, and departed from, Athens. Had I known that he would change his itinerary of travel, and take Greece on his way home, I should, of course, have abandoned my trip to Constantinople, in spite of my illness, and he would have received that share of hospitality at the Legation at Athens which was extended to him with such profusion and warmth of welcome from the moment he stepped into the railway-carriage at Auburn—going westward—until he descended from



the train on the same spot—coming from the east—having completed the circuit of the world.

As it was—so Seward laughingly informed me when I saw him in America—he paid at Athens his first and only hotel bill during the whole of this memorable journey.

In later years I underwent a second quarantine, this time in the harbour of Marseilles; but my experience there was in happy contrast to the discomfort at Delos. Our passengers were given the option of being landed on the quarantine-grounds or remaining on board the steamer during the twelve days of detention. Three of us, only, decided to remain on board, where we enjoyed the comfort of our own private cabins and an exceptionally good cuisine provided at our own expense by one of the best restaurants at Marseilles. My companions were Mr.—now Sir Edgar—Vincent and Mr. Harbord, a ‘Queen’s messenger.’

Should either of these gentlemen chance to read these lines, I am sure that he will agree with me in the opinion that they never passed a more congenial or jovial quarantine than on that occasion. It was, so to speak, but a continuation of the voyage, with the advantages of a motionless ship, a soundless sea, pleasant companionship, and the daily newspapers.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

### AN AFFAIR WITH THE SUBLIME PORTE.

‘Is it a *money* claim upon the Government which brings you to Constantinople?’ asked a foreign Ambassador on the day after my arrival. I informed him that it was.

‘And, pray, how long do you expect to remain?’ he continued.

I replied that, if necessary, I was prepared to remain three or four months.

‘Say three or four years, *mon ami*, and then you will be as far off from obtaining your money as you are to-day. I have known men who came out here to prosecute claims whose hair has turned gray with the mental strain to which they were subjected, and who went home broken down in health without a Turkish lira to show for their years of fruitless labour. Indeed, I know of one case where the unhappy victim of Turkish duplicity and procrastination died in a



madhouse! Do not smile; I am telling the unvarnished truth. We have private claims upon the Turks in our own Embassy which my predecessors have endeavoured during twenty-five years to collect, without obtaining a single lira! In the first place—especially of late years—there has not been enough money in the Ottoman treasury to pay the expenses of the military, naval, and civil service. Every fresh loan—negotiated on the most exorbitant terms—barely suffices to avert national bankruptcy. The money goes to pay off former debts, or the interest on previous loans, or towards the maintenance of a worthless navy, or of this dissolute and irresponsible Sultan. I give you these facts that you may be prepared for the result. I don't wish to discourage you from making the attempt, for that of course you will do, but to warn you in time, that you may not waste years and ruin your health in chasing a chimera.'

This was certainly a most discouraging prospect, and one fully confirmed by my own Minister and the British Ambassador, but I was prepared for it. I was thoroughly aware of the condition of the Turkish finances, and that to struggle with a Government whose diplomacy consists in prevarication and circumlocution is to fight a windmill.

Nevertheless, I had bound myself to make the effort—with all the odds against me—in order to



preserve an enterprise which the indebtedness of the Ottoman Government had brought to the verge of bankruptcy.

The anomaly in the case was that I, an American, had been entrusted with this semi-diplomatic mission by an English company. I was myself greatly surprised to receive such an application, which was increased by the fact that, at the time, I was personally unacquainted with any of the directors. It was explainable upon the ground that, having previously been fortunate enough to bring to a successful conclusion a rather complex affair in another part of the world, the case had been brought to the attention of the directors of the English company.

Although flattered by the confidence of a company of bondholders composed of eminent and able men—two of whom were members of Parliament and one a member of the Cabinet—I was not inclined to accept the proposition, although it was accompanied by the tempting overture that my own terms, whatever they might be, would be accepted. Having placed my sons at an English college, I had taken a house in London for the season, and was enjoying a period of leisure after several years of official life abroad. I consented, however, to read the documents relating to the case before my final decision. It was apparent, after so doing, that many difficulties would have to



be overcome before even an approach to a settlement could be made; but these obstacles rather excited than checked a desire on my part to undertake the business. There are men who are tempted to climb steep and rugged mountains by the obstacles which have to be surmounted, who would not make the ascent if the broad and beaten highway of travel was before them. Something of this feeling was natural to me. To meet and overcome resistance offers a zest and wholesome excitement, whether to physical or mental labour, which the ordinary routine of life does not afford; moreover, there was a novelty in this aspect of Oriental diplomacy which, in my ignorance of the extent to which Turkish obstinacy can go, threw a sort of barbaric glamour over the affair. Influenced, in large measure, by these considerations, I accepted the mission with the understanding that if, after a preliminary visit to Constantinople to examine the case from the Turkish point of view, I came to the opinion that the prosecution of these claims would involve more time and expense to the company than they could afford, I should relinquish the task.

These claims had been for a long period in the hands of the British Embassy, which, with patience and perseverance, had pushed the matter to the extremity of diplomatic prudence, but, as in similar



instances with other embassies, without practical results. It was the opinion of the directors in London that a 'free lance,' unshackled by the limitations of the diplomatic service, yet acting, when necessity required official formalities, through the Embassy, might be more successful.

I do not intend in this sketch to weary the reader with a detailed account of the prosecution of claims which would not interest the public. It would be but a tedious repetition of mental and physical trials, which, had my clients been other than Englishmen—a fact which involved a feeling of responsibility which it would have wounded my national pride to have relinquished—I should not have endured to the extent I did. I shall confine myself simply to the record of such incidents connected with the case as may serve to give the reader an idea of the *modus operandi* involved in prosecuting a claim for money upon an impecunious Government whose Ministers—with the courtesy and plausibility of which they are masters—were determined not even to recognise it.

This was not my first visit to the city of sultans and pashas, of mosques and harems, of palaces and bazaars, of official grandeur and of diplomatic intrigue. I had a few years before, as I have stated, been a guest of the Turkish Government, and received official courtesies at the hands of the Ministers at



the Porte. These officials had then risen in a body to receive me, served me with coffee and stilted phrases of welcome, and placed at my disposal a Government carriage and a dragoman, to visit, with an 'open sesame' order, all the public buildings which I might desire to see.

My present visit to Constantinople was in singular contrast to the former one. I was not now an honoured guest, but a disagreeable claimant for a hundred and odd thousand Turkish pounds, and with a 'Stand and deliver or take the consequence' argument, knowing full well that the Government had not the slightest intention to stand and deliver, and cared not a pin for the consequences.

My first visit on this occasion was to the Grand Vizier, a very irregular proceeding on my part, and quite contrary to the red-tape rules of the Embassy; indeed, the Ambassador declined to be responsible 'for anything I might say' to his Highness. With this understanding, he consented to allow the dragoman of the Embassy to accompany me. This was precisely what I wanted, for I intended to lay the case before the Grand Vizier after a fashion of my own, on the principle of 'the higher the aim, the higher the shot.' I had thought of appealing to the Sultan himself, but, although the days of the bow-string and the sack had passed away, I feared that



the violent temper of Ábdul-Ázīz—especially violent at any demand for money—might ruin my case past recovery.

The Grand Vizier, Houssain Avnei Pasha, received me with the utmost courtesy, and listened to my statement with apparent interest, promising, as I expected he would, immediate attention to the case, which should be brought up and discussed at the first meeting of the 'Great Council' of Ministers. This interview proved to be the first roll up the hill of the Sisyphus stone, which during a weary series of months I succeeded in repeatedly getting nearly to the top, to roll back again to the spot from which it started.

During my interview with his Highness an incident occurred. We were interrupted for a moment by the entrance into the room of one of the deaf-mutes—employed, according to ancient usage, at the Sublime Porte as messengers at the different departments—who announced, by signs, that the X Ambassador was waiting for an interview. To keep an Ambassador waiting, especially one like his Excellency, who was, in one sense, the terror of the Turkish Ministers, was without precedent. Nevertheless, I went on with my argument to the end, feigning not to observe the nervous anxiety of the Grand Vizier for me to give place to the greater



man. As I and the dragoman passed out, the X Ambassador passed in, giving a searching and angry glance at the stranger who had ventured to keep him waiting.

‘This is most unfortunate,’ said the dragoman when we were outside; ‘he will be sure to find out from the Grand Vizier who you are and the nature of the business, and put a spoke in your wheel when he discovers that it is a claim for money, and an English claim at that.’ My companion was right.

The ‘dragomen’—interpreters—attached to foreign embassies and legations in Oriental countries must not be confounded with the dragomen employed by travellers in those countries. The former are educated gentlemen who are not only masters of the principal languages spoken in foreign lands, but are in confidential relations with their chiefs, and are distinguished by their diplomatic tact and reticence. There is a sort of freemasonry between themselves, and although they never reveal the secrets of their respective embassies, they pick up a good deal of information, which can be communicated, with discretion, to each other. Thus I learned what the X Ambassador said in private to the Grand Vizier respecting my business. On learning that the claims related to English property situated in Turkey, and involving the payment of a considerable sum of



money, the Ambassador advised the Grand Vizier to let the case drag on—for years, if necessary—until, wearied with want of success, the English company would be forced to sell the property to the Turkish Government ‘for a song.’

As the X Ambassador chanced to be the only member of the diplomatic body whom I did not know personally, I saw the importance of directly making his acquaintance, and stopping, if not too late, any further interference with my business. I had requested the colleague who introduced me to leave us together, when this formality was over. The X Ambassador received me with great cordiality, and was profuse in expressions of esteem and friendship for the American Government and the American people. ‘Why, then, your Excellency,’ I asked, when we were alone, ‘have you interfered with my business, and advised the Grand Vizier to oppose the claims of the company I represent?’

The Ambassador was taken aback with genuine surprise: first, that his private words to the Grand Vizier had reached my ears; and secondly, that I, an American, had any connection with the claims of an English company. He had not recognised me as the individual he had seen at the Porte, and expressed his deep mortification at the incident. It was true, he said, that he had used the words in



question, but he assured me that they were spoken 'in jest,' and that the Grand Vizier could not have taken them *au sérieux*. At all events, he would 'make it all right' with the Grand Vizier on the following evening at the ball at his Embassy, where his Highness would be present, and to which, as well as to a diplomatic dinner, he sent me cards of invitation.

The Ambassador was as good as his word. At the ball I kept my eye upon him, and observed that in the course of the evening he drew the Grand Vizier aside, and held with him an earnest conversation. He subsequently informed me that he had fully convinced his Highness that his words at the Porte were a mere pleasantry, and that, having now become acquainted with the merits of the case, he strongly advised the Turkish Government to pay the claims of the English company. From that time forward the X Ambassador, so far as I could judge, was my faithful ally, and on one occasion he certainly did me a signal service by imparting a piece of political information, extracted from the Turkish Government, of which his colleagues were utterly ignorant.

After fruitless endeavours to get the Ministers to examine and pass the claims as a whole, I agreed that, if the first of the several claims was



paid, I would consent that the remainder should be submitted to arbitration. This proposition simplified matters, and I gave my undivided attention to this first claim, hammering upon it as upon the first link of a chain upon which the others depended. How much climbing of the long flights of stairs conducting to the ministries I accomplished in order to confer with their excellencies, or attend councils of Ministers, as my case came up over and over again for discussion, without results, I cannot say, but I well know that the very sight of the 'Sublime Porte' became in time a loathsome spectacle, and the palaver of the Ministers a wearisome bore. It more than once occurred that when this claim—which could not be legally disputed, notwithstanding the efforts of the Government advocate, a remarkably shrewd French lawyer, to find a flaw in it—was on the point of being approved by the Grand Council, the whole body of Ministers resigned office, and the business had to be gone over again, *de novo*, by their successors.

I had been frequently asked by old residents, who assumed to know the secret springs of Oriental diplomacy, why I did not oil the slow movements of the Turkish machine with *backsheish*, carefully and prudently applied. Where a Government contract is the object in view, this system is occasionally an



advantage; but the money thus expended has often been thrown away in consequence of the party bribed being unable to carry out his intentions. In my own case, I felt that 'the attempt, and not the deed,' might undo me; for if suspected or discovered, the integrity of my position and the validity of the claims would be impaired. But there was a higher consideration than this. Acting in behalf of an honourable English company who claimed nothing more than they believed they deserved to obtain, and whose position was sound and unassailable, I saw no reason for stooping to what in England and in my own country would be considered a disgraceful proceeding.

An amusing instance of the miscarriage of *back-sheish* fell within my own observation. The Ottoman Government, with an eye to a not very distant war, invited proposals for a contract of 300,000 foreign manufactured muskets. The competition was very keen, and the rival competitors from various countries were seen daily at the War Department exhibiting their samples and urging their claims. The agent of an American firm informed me one day that his proposals had been accepted, and that the contract—having been duly drawn up and approved by the Government—only awaited the signature of the Grand Vizier. Going over to the



Porte to have this last formality completed, he was considerably astonished to find that, at the eleventh hour, that high functionary had rejected the contract in question, and had signed a new one with another party. What still more astonished him was that the price to be paid for the other's muskets, which, as he claimed, were inferior to his own, was much higher than the price agreed upon with himself. The terms were cash on delivery, but when, some weeks later, the first cargo arrived, the Grand Vizier who had made the negotiation no longer existed. He had been killed by the hand of an assassin. I asked the contractor what difference this fact would make in the validity of the contract. 'None,' he replied; 'but it makes considerable difference to me, for I now pocket half a dollar on each gun, which would have gone—*by private verbal arrangement*—into the pocket of his Highness!'

One day an incident occurred in my affair which brought matters to a crisis. The Grand Vizier, by the pressure brought upon him, had at last been persuaded to authorize the Minister of Public Works to report in favour of the settlement of the 'first claim,' and I went to the Porte prepared to receive and sign on my part this long-desired document. When I arrived, I was informed that his Highness, on the receipt of the papers which committed the Govern-



ment to a settlement of the claim, suddenly changed his mind, declared that his instructions had been misunderstood, and sent the papers back with a peremptory order to report adversely on the claim!

This was so clearly a case of bad faith that I determined to protest against it in emphatic language, and for this purpose selected an hour when the Council of Ministers had assembled. A private interview, such as the British Ambassador would, if at all, be compelled to have, was not in accordance with my ideas, for I cared not how much publicity was given to this unwarranted proceeding. What took place in the Council-chamber I do not propose to relate, beyond the fact that in the excitement of argument the presiding officer uttered words which I chose to consider as personally insulting to those whom I represented. Thereupon, without a word in reply, I turned my back upon the assembly and left the Council-chamber. As I expected, I received on the following day an apologetic message from the President of the Council, begging me to present myself again before that body in order to discuss the situation. This I respectfully declined to do, sending back word that I should forward an official account of what had taken place to the directors of the company at London, who would bring it to the knowledge of the Home Government. I held the



‘whip hand’ on this occasion, and determined to hold it. My confidential agent at the Porte subsequently informed me that the Ministers were ‘in a funk,’ and looked forward to receiving a reprimand from the palace, which would be the equivalent of dismissal from office. The remainder of the proceedings comes within the province of diplomatic secrecy. Suffice it to say that the Grand Vizier recalled the papers which he had returned to the Council, and in due time I had the satisfaction to sign a receipt for the full amount of ‘Claim No. 1’ in Treasury bonds.

But ‘Treasury bonds,’ or orders for payment on an empty Treasury, do not, in Turkey, mean money. On surveying the financial position, there seemed to be but one of two courses open to me. I must either hold these bonds for an indefinite period until the condition of things improved—which might not be the case for years, if even then—or sell them to the foreign bankers at Constantinople for half their face value. The Ambassador assured me that at the Treasury they had not ‘one shilling to rub against another,’ a statement fully confirmed by every financier to whom I applied for information. The prospect looked black enough, especially so in view of the condition of things then existing at Constantinople. Let me try to place this condition before the reader.



For a succession of months an absolute struggle for existence had been going on, not only among the usually impoverished classes, but among thousands willing to work, if work could have been found for them. The condition of the finances was such that the wages of the employés in all the departments of the public service had not only been reduced, but in large measure were paid in *mandas*, which could not be cashed at the Treasury, and were sold to the Jew money-dealers and other extortionists for half or a third of their face value. Bribery and under-valuation at the Custom-house were carried on almost openly, and petty theft among the underlings was of common occurrence. The most serious phase of affairs was the scarcity and consequent high price of bread, for the bakers were refusing to supply the Government until they received something on account of the overdue bills, which for months had not been paid. General business was suspended or reduced to such small transactions as necessity required, and, but for the money distributed by foreign visitors at the bazaar, that vast focus of merchandise and traffic would have been deserted. As it was, the stranger in Constantinople went over to Stamboul with fear and trembling lest he should have his pockets picked by thieves, who followed and watched his movements, or be insulted by the rabble, who, all over the



city, were ready for any opportunity to show their hatred to the foreigner, under the impression that things would be vastly better but for the gold which went out of the country to pay the interest on the national debt. This idea was fostered in large measure by the *softas*—religious students connected with the mosques—a large and influential body of malcontents, who were known to be plotting against the foreign residents and sojourners as infidel opponents to the national religion, and as leeches drawing the life-blood out of the resources of the Empire. Not infrequently the harmless passer-by in the streets, if he wore the black hat of the foreigner, would be insulted by ribald words or threatening gestures, and would often have to wear for safety the red *fez*, which is the distinguishing mark of the native subject of the Sultan. Many foreign ladies had tales to tell of insults received by them when unaccompanied on their shopping excursions or visits by a *cavas*. On one occasion a *softa* shook his clenched fist in my wife's face, accompanied by muttered threats, as she was passing through the street in a sedan chair. At the bazaar the stranger had to be constantly on the alert against personal danger, so suddenly would a crowd of idlers assemble on the least pretence and commit some act of vandalism before he could escape rough treatment.



I was once bargaining for a carpet at the shop-door of a dealer in one of the passages of that vast network of 7,000 shops, when a far-off roar of voices reached our ears. The dealer, an old acquaintance of mine, seized me by the arm, drew me into the shop, concealed me behind a high pile of carpets, and proceeded to let down his shutters and bolt his door; indeed, the clash of descending shutters and slamming of doors all around us indicated that danger was at hand. But before these precautions were completed a rushing and vociferous crowd swept through the passage like infuriated wild beasts howling for their prey. It turned out to be only the pursuit of a thief, but such excitements were of daily occurrence, and a stranger caught by such a crowd would have fared badly at their hands.

As may be inferred, this was not precisely the time for obtaining money from the Treasury, or even for going over to Stamboul—the Turkish quarter—in search of it; but I had made up my mind to make an effort in that direction before submitting to either of the other alternatives.

As a rule, one who takes a hack from a street-stand selects the best-looking vehicle, horse, and driver; but on this occasion I selected from the stand—where the public vehicles are never very attractive—the meanest hack and most disreputable



driver, in order to escape the notice which a respectable turn-out would, at that time, have attracted from the idle and ill-disposed crowd. Pulling the shades of the vehicle down, I directed the cabby to drive to the *Mallié*—the Treasury building—at which the man stared at me with curiosity, wondering what possible business I could have with a moneyless institution, from which even the most pressing of claimants, armed with money orders for the payment of their wages, could not extract a *beshtic*. As we rattled over the shaky pavements of Stamboul, no other vehicle met the view, and the total absence of any business movement in that usually bustling quarter of the city evidenced the utter stagnation of trade. As I alighted at the steps of the *Mallié*, I found them occupied by a crowd of wretched-looking men and women, who it seems were in daily attendance, hoping against hope that, by waiting and appealing to the liveried employés of the institution, as they passed in and out, something on account of their wages might be forthcoming.

I sent in my card to the Minister, a newly-appointed official, to me personally unknown, and was soon seated at his side in his *bureau de travail*, having asked for a private interview. I had prepared my 'little speech' as I drove over from Pera to Stamboul, and delivered it with all the impressive-



ness and unction which I could summon to my aid. In effect I informed his Excellency that—presenting them—these Treasury orders were placed in my hands for collection under very peculiar circumstances, and unless paid without delay the consequences to the Ottoman Government could not fail to be disastrous. It was a matter not only involving the good faith of the Government, but involving the solvency of an English company and the prosperity of an enterprise which was important to the commercial interests of the Turkish Empire. On their payment also devolved the sitting of an arbitration for the settlement of the remaining claims, which if postponed would seriously complicate matters, and which I should cause to be postponed—holding the Government responsible for the consequences—until ‘Claim No. 1’ was completely settled by the payment of these *bons du trésor*. To this, and much more to the same effect, his Excellency listened with great attention. His first remark was:

‘Your argument, monsieur, is very cogent, and appears to me worthy of the most serious attention on my part; but, as you must be fully aware, there exists an insuperable obstacle to this payment, namely, that we have no money to cash these bonds. Even were the Sultan himself to order the payment, the condition of the Treasury would prevent the execution of the order.’



‘And when, may I ask, do you propose to pay them?’ I rejoined.

‘It is impossible to answer the question. Every lira that comes in from the Customs and other sources of supply immediately goes out again to meet the most pressing wants of the public service.’

‘Do I understand,’ I responded, ‘that you decline to name a day when these bonds will be cashed?’

‘It is impossible to do so. All that I can promise is that at the first available moment they shall be paid.’

‘Will it, in your opinion, be within a week?’

‘Within a week, monsieur! Certainly not. I must be frank with you, and not encourage hopes which cannot be fulfilled. Possibly within a year or eighteen months we may find ourselves in a position to take up half the bonds. Certainly not before then.’

‘In that case,’ said I, rising and taking my hat, ‘I will no longer intrude upon your Excellency’s time and attention. I received these bonds in good faith, and accepted them as the equivalent of money. I have been deceived, and it remains for me to lay the case before his Majesty the Sultan. See,’ I continued, drawing a note from my pocket and handing it to his Excellency, ‘this is a note from his Majesty’s private secretary stating that he will



request for me a private audience as near as possible to the day and hour which I may name as convenient to myself.'

The Minister opened his eyes to a wider extent than I fancy he ever did before, and appeared to realize for the first time that I really intended business.

'May I ask,' he said, with a look of intense anxiety, after reading the note, 'the nature of your intended communication to his Majesty?'

'That I must decline to state. The communication will be strictly private and unofficial. That his Majesty will be annoyed when he is informed of the circumstances of the case may be assumed, and I very much fear that the Grand Vizier and his Ministers may suffer in consequence; but I offer no positive opinion on this head. I have to thank your Excellency for the attention you have been kind enough to give me, and to express the hope that no unpleasant consequences to yourself will ensue from a step which, under the circumstances, cannot be avoided.'

Instead of taking my extended hand, as I made a movement to retire, his Excellency begged me to be seated while he reconsidered the matter with a view to its being possibly arranged between us. The conference lasted for a half-hour or so, at the ex-



piration of which time the Minister, after conferring with some of the subordinates, thought he saw his way to divert a certain sum, expected from the Customs within three days, from its intended appropriation to the payment of my bonds. Would I wait until Monday, the third day following?

This I agreed to do, provided some money on account was paid me at once.

‘That,’ said the Minister, ‘is simply impossible, as there is nothing in the Treasury.’

‘Do you mean to say,’ I asked, ‘that there is absolutely no money at this moment in the Treasury?’

‘I will show you,’ he said, and, ringing a hand-bell, he sent for the cashier. On the appearance of that functionary, he requested him to ascertain and report the exact sum in gold then in the public safe. He returned with a written statement showing about 300 Turkish pounds as the sum on hand. ‘You see, monsieur,’ said the Minister, ‘the straits to which we are reduced. But on Monday I will have ready for you the entire amount of your bonds.’

‘I will take these £300, Excellency, on account,’ I said.

‘Certainly not, monsieur!’ he exclaimed, colouring with mortification. ‘I would not insult you with such a payment, and I should be severely re-



primanded by my chief were I to do so. I beg you to have sufficient confidence in me to await until Monday, when £10,000 will be ready for you.'

'I will take this money, Excellency, small as is the sum, not as a guarantee of *your* good faith, which admits of no question, but as putting it out of my power to say that the bonds, when presented, were refused payment.'

Finally, with real or feigned humility, he ordered the cashier to bring up the money in a bag, with which I returned to Pera.

It was not the money value of this little payment which gave it any importance, but the principle which it established, namely, that the Treasury Department had committed itself to the acknowledgment that the bonds were to be paid at presentation, and in gold, thus guaranteeing the transaction. I now stood on firm ground, and determined to maintain it at all hazards. I expected further procrastination, and was therefore not very much surprised to be told by the Minister's secretary, when I called on the appointed Monday, that his Excellency deeply regretted that, in spite of his utmost endeavours to obtain the money from the Customs, none had been received. It was, however, sure to come in within the week, and I should not be again disappointed. The Minister begged to be excused



for not seeing me in person, as he was in attendance at a meeting of the Council.

I informed the secretary that I had come on a specified day for a specified purpose, and under an absolute promise from his Excellency that the bonds would then and there be paid. Under these circumstances it would be a reflection upon the honour of the Minister if I retired without the fulfilment of his official engagement. I should therefore remain until the business was completed.

‘But,’ said the secretary, ‘his Excellency is not likely to return to the department until to-morrow.’

‘Then I will remain until to-morrow.’

‘What! pass the night here?’

‘Precisely so, and more nights if necessary. I can sleep upon a sofa, and I presume that my meals can be sent in from a restaurant?’

The young man was moved to immoderate laughter.

‘Of course, sir, you are joking,’ he said.

I then told him that this was no joking matter, and that I was never more serious in my life. I begged him to understand that my personal discomfort was not for a moment to be considered in view of my official responsibilities. I had stated to him my intentions, and further discussion would be useless. I requested him to do me the favour to



inquire respecting my meals and accommodation for the night, and at his earliest convenience to inform the Minister of my decision.

‘I will tell him at once,’ said the secretary. ‘Perhaps his Excellency has not yet left for the Council.’

I thought it very likely that he had not. Such proved to be the case, for after a long interval the secretary returned with a note from his chief expressing deep regret for the disappointment occasioned by the non-receipt of the expected money, and assuring me that if I would be good enough to give him until the following Saturday, on that day, without fail, the money would be ready for me.

This written engagement gave me a fair excuse for giving up the prison discipline which I had fully determined upon, and I sent back a message to the Minister that on the day mentioned I should present myself for the purpose specified.

On the morning of that day I called at my bankers’ to request their dragoman to accompany me to the Treasury building; but that highly respectable and cautious firm could not be persuaded to believe that the expedition would be anything more than a useless exposure on my part to possible insult or injury in the streets of Stamboul, and virtually declined to allow their dragoman to give countenance to the



rash proceeding. In point of fact, some disturbances which had occurred within a day or two gave colour to these apprehensions. I was more successful at my lawyers', and with their dragoman I drove over without incident to the *Mallié*.

The Minister received me with a smiling countenance, which was the harbinger of good news. The money had that very day come in from the Customs, or some other source, and was ready for delivery in exchange for the bonds. On this occasion I descended to the Treasury room with my dragoman to witness the tallying and delivery of the coin. When the cashier had completed this formality, and the gold in rows of sealed bags was placed before me, he threw open to their fullest extent the iron doors of the safe, pulled out all the drawers, to assure me that not a single Turkish pound remained in them, and exclaimed: 'Effendi, you have emptied the Imperial Treasury!'

Then two porters in livery descended with the bags, and stored them under the seats of my disreputable hack; a policeman, summoned for the occasion, mounted the box-seat beside the driver, and we drove over to Galata without exciting any particular attention from the idlers in the street, who doubtless supposed that some thief was being taken to prison. What *did* excite attention was the



appearance in the office of my bankers of their porters bringing in bags of coin purporting to have come from the Turkish Treasury! All the partners and clerks of the establishment gathered together to witness the unwonted spectacle, and the head of the firm exclaimed: 'To my certain knowledge, this is the first money paid by the Turkish Government against English claims for the last eight years!'

Now came the final tug of war, the arbitration on the remaining claims. This I knew the Ministry at the Porte would attempt to shirk, although in the articles of agreement between the Turkish Government and the English company it was expressly stated that, in case of disagreement on any question between the two parties, such questions should be submitted for final settlement to a mixed commission of arbitration to be selected by both parties. A new British Ambassador, Sir Henry Layard, had just assumed office, and as he was unacquainted with the details of this case, I thought it expedient that he should have his attention called to it and his hands strengthened by the Home Government. I accordingly visited London for this purpose. My interview with the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Lord Derby, may be worth describing, as illustrating his personal peculiarities. By appointment I saw his lordship in his private office in Downing Street.



He placed a chair for me and another for himself, the latter facing the wall, where, crossing his legs and turning his head upwards, he fixed his eyes upon a cornice of the ceiling, as if his thoughts were far above mundane considerations, and requested me to state my case. This I did, during which he never changed his attitude or spoke a word, excepting once when, in the middle of my narrative, he turned to me for a moment and asked, with reference to my endeavours to get the Ministers at the Porte to advance matters :

‘ Did you ever try the *other* thing ?’

‘ No, my lord ; I never forget that I am prosecuting an *English* case.’

‘ Just so. Pray, proceed.’

When I had concluded, Derby rose from his chair and remarked that he believed he understood the case perfectly, but that, as the Government could only act upon documentary statements, he would be obliged if I would sit down in the adjoining room, where I would be alone and uninterrupted, and commit to paper the substance of my remarks. When this was completed, I waited upon his lordship with the document in hand. He was in conversation at the time with a foreign Ambassador, of whom he asked permission to attend to me for a few moments, and then read with great care what I



had written, which he pronounced to be very satisfactory. He also promised to forward by that very night's post an official note to Sir Henry, which he thought would meet the requirements of the case. So it did, and I found the new Ambassador prepared to carry out my wishes with energy and decision. At his request I put in writing the 'sort of note' I wanted addressed to the Porte, drawing it up in stronger language than I should have employed myself, in order that the modifications I expected he would make would still leave it emphatic and to the point. I subsequently found that he had sent in an almost verbatim copy of my own. The prompt and efficient manner in which this business had been handled by the Foreign Office and the Embassy was a fair example of English diplomacy as contrasted with the eternal procrastination and inefficiency of the Sublime Porte.

This note prevented any attempt on the part of the Turkish Government to evade the Commission of Arbitration, but at each step of the preparatory work, from the drawing up of the *procès-verbal* to the appointment of the commissioners, frivolous excuses and tedious discussions were interposed by the Ministers, for the sake of gaining time. As a last resort, the Government, with the aid of their astute French advocate, concocted a list of 'counter-claims,'



aggregating the modest sum of 465,745 Turkish pounds, not a word of which intention on their part had been officially communicated at the outset of the proceedings. This device did not, however, greatly disturb me, because it carried on its face the probability that, if the Government seriously believed that we owed them more than they owed us, the appointment of the Commission of Arbitration would have been hastened rather than retarded. Finally, and greatly to my relief, as will be presently shown, the *procès-verbal* was signed by the respective parties, and the sitting of the Commission was formally authorized by imperial *firman*.

And now occurred a circumstance quite unforeseen by the Ottoman Government or by the claimants, and which ultimately brought about an extraordinary ending of the whole business. This circumstance, however, was known to me personally as about to occur. I had been informed, under promise of secrecy on my part, first by the diplomatic representative of the Great Power concerned, and again by the military representative of the same Power, some days in advance of its publicity, what would take place, and this information was the secret cause which impelled me to hasten in every possible way the action of the Ministers at the Porte, being persuaded in my own mind that the circum-



stance when known to them would be made the pretext for a final abandonment of the Commission of Arbitration.

The circumstance was this. During these latter months a war had been waging between Turkey and a foreign Power, one of the results of which was the enforced transfer by Turkey to the victorious Power of a large section of Turkish territory. On this section the property of the English company was situated. No sooner was this announcement of intended transfer made known to the Turks, although not yet confirmed by treaty, than the Ottoman Government declared that they were no longer a party to the English company's claims, since the property in question was about to be transferred to the political jurisdiction of another Power. Accordingly, at the very first sitting of the Commission of Arbitration on the claims, and before the proceedings had commenced, the Turkish advocate arose, and expressing on the part of his Government the opinion above given, retired from the case and from the court-room without waiting for any response from the commissioners. The court then discussed this new phase of the position, arriving at the decision that the commissioners having been appointed, irrespective of any other conditions, to adjudicate upon the claims, they were bound to go on with this duty



without reference to political events. The sudden retirement of the Turkish advocate was held to be irregular, and notice was sent to the Government that, should he not appear to defend the case, the case would go on without him, his absence being held to be evidence that the Government relinquished their defence.

The Commission of Arbitration consisted of one Commissioner on each side, selected by each party, with a third Commissioner to be selected by the other two as umpire in case of disagreement, whose decision should be final. I selected, on the part of the company, the British Consul-General at Constantinople. The Turkish Government selected the Sultan's Treasurer at the palace, a man of judicial abilities, but one naturally supposed to be in expectation of *official promotion*. Notwithstanding this drawback, I accepted him without protest rather than allow the Government an excuse for claiming that they were not properly represented. The umpire, whose services, as it turned out, were not required, was to have been the French Ambassador. The sittings were held in the court-room of the British Consulate, and occupied, if I remember rightly, seventeen days.

I had engaged the services of an English barrister, speaking the native tongue, to plead the case, in



order that the Turkish Commissioner, whose knowledge of French was limited, might not plead that he had misunderstood any of the points presented.

A few days before the meeting of the Commission I called at an early hour at this gentleman's residence to appoint a later hour for seeing him at his office. He received me in his dressing-robe, apologizing for so doing on the ground that he had had a disturbed night, and had overslept himself. He was a very courteous gentleman, and at parting accompanied me to the street-door, remarking that he would see me at his office at the hour named. No sooner was the door closed upon me than he turned from the entry into the drawing-room, then unoccupied, advanced to the middle of the room, took a loaded pistol from his pocket, applied it to his temple, and blew out his brains!

This melancholy event caused a sensation in the English colony for several days, during which it transpired that some domestic trouble had induced the rash act. It was a rather curious circumstance that the two parties to the suit lost their respective advocates about the same time and in the ways stated.

It was several days after the conclusion of the sittings of the Commission before the award was declared.



I had expected the case would have to be referred to the umpire for settlement, as I very much doubted if the Turkish Commissioner possessed the moral courage to render a verdict adverse to his Government, however much he himself might be convinced of the validity of the claims. In this I was agreeably disappointed. With the exception of certain minor claims, which the two commissioners agreed were not as substantially founded as were the others, the award was declared to be in favour of the English company.

Thus terminated, so far as my services were required, as tedious and hopeless a struggle with an obstinate and perverse Government, in behalf of simple justice, as perhaps ever fell to the lot of one similarly engaged. Four years had elapsed since I first visited Constantinople on this special mission, during which certain political events transpired in the empire which rendered the prosecution of the claims during these periods impossible. Among these events may be named the repeated changes in the Ministry; the financial crises, involving the repudiation of the interest on the foreign debt; the dethronement of two Sultans; the assassination of a Grand Vizier; a foreign war, and the political and financial prostration ensuing therefrom. These intervening periods afforded me the opportunity for



returning to England, and to these, very likely, I was indebted for the preservation of my health ; for no constitution, however rugged, could withstand a certain degree of nervous prostration resulting from continuous and unbroken mental strain.

There now remained a political complication to dispose of, which the company in England were alone in a position to attend to. They held the award obtained by the Commission of Arbitration, a document which could not be invalidated, and which fixed the responsibility for payment of the amount involved upon the Ottoman Government. The question now was whether the transfer of territory, and consequent transfer of the property, to the political jurisdiction of another Power carried with it the transfer of liabilities involved. But there was another complication. The Power to whom the Ottoman Government had transferred this territory, —as the spoils of war—had in turn transferred it, for a *quid pro quo*, to a third Power. The latter repudiated any responsibility for the debts of Turkey, and Turkey repudiated her liability for reasons already given. The Queen's Counsel, to whom the question was referred for an opinion, decided that Turkey's contention was correct, and that the Power in whose territory the property now lay should assume the position of the Ottoman Government



had the latter continued in political jurisdiction over the same. This view seems to have prevailed when these and other questions arising from territorial transfers came before, and were decided by, the famous Berlin Conference, at which all the Great Powers were represented.

A fortunate circumstance for all the parties concerned now occurred. The Government within whose territory the property now lay clearly foresaw that its acquisition by the State could be made the source of great political and commercial advantage. Negotiations for its purchase were accordingly entered into with the English company, the latter being more willing to entertain the matter in view of the increased value of the bonds and shares consequent upon the settlement of the question of the claims by the Commission of Arbitration. The result was a transfer, by sale, of the property, together with all the claims and liabilities connected therewith, on terms which, although involving some sacrifice to the company, were satisfactory to both parties.

In concluding this narrative, it is but fair to take into consideration the circumstances which, in a measure, compel the Ottoman Government to adopt a system of diplomacy the synonym of which is delay. To admit their own liability, in cases like



the present, without the pecuniary ability to meet the claims, would be to expose themselves to a ceaseless and harassing pressure from their creditors, leading to financial bankruptcy. On the other hand, to deny their own liability would be to open the door to forcible measures, leading possibly to military occupation and the seizure of the public revenues or of national territory.

The Turks therefore, as before remarked, say neither *Yea* nor *Nay*, but with plausible promises or specious evasions exercise a studied system of procrastination, which in the majority of instances exhausts the patience of the claimant, until he finally postpones the case to the 'Greek Kalends.'

Another consideration should be taken into account in passing judgment upon that Government. Their experience in past times with foreign contractors, and other parties seeking private advantages at the expense of the Turks, have not, in all cases, tended to inspire confidence in the honourable motives of the applicants. In certain well-known mining, railway, and other enterprises conceded to foreigners, the Government have been defrauded to an extent sufficient to awaken suspicion and distrust whenever an application is made for a contract by foreigners, or a claim is presented for payment.



In a word—and it is not too strong a word to employ—the grasping aims and practised deceptions of the ‘infidel,’ in his so-called efforts to ‘civilize’ Turkey, have too often proved to be more disastrous than beneficial to that empire.



## CHAPTER XXVII.

## THE THREE SULTANS.

WHEN I arrived in Constantinople, Sultan Ábdul-Ázīz was on the throne. If not actually mad, he was at times next door to it. Imperious, dogmatic, ignorant, and self-willed, he kept his Ministers as well as his whole *entourage* in a condition of humiliating subserviency. The former, when summoned to his presence, entered the apartment 'salaaming' to the floor, with downcast eyes, and then shrunk themselves up against the wall in the attitude of slaves about to be scourged. There they waited until their august master made a sign to them to approach nearer to the ottoman on which he was seated cross-legged or reclining at half-length. This he did by an insolent wave of the hand. The progress from the wall to the imperial ottoman was a very slow affair, as the Minister advanced but a few steps at a time, salaamed and stood still until another sign indicated that he was to approach nearer. When



this act of humiliation was accomplished with due solemnity, his Majesty took his own time to ask his question or issue his order, as the case might be, until the supple knees and the bent back of his Highness or his Excellency ached with the demeaning posture. When at last the order was given, it was often so irrelevant or absurd that, beyond an humble promise of immediate obedience, nothing further was done in the matter. From this attitude of inflexible command, Ábdul-Áziz would frequently descend to the most puerile pursuits with the underlings of the household.

I occasionally saw the Sultan 'going to mosque'—a ceremony that all visitors to Constantinople desire to see. Whatever were his mental qualifications, he certainly presented on these occasions a majestic appearance. Portly in person, with a dark complexion and grave aspect, his jet-black hair contrasting with his close-fitting crimson fez, he sat his snow-white horse with ease and dignity, followed by a retinue of richly-caparisoned steeds, mounted by officials of the palace and followed by a military band and a division of troops. If the progress was made by water, the scene was equally brilliant, as the Sultan swept by in his gold and white *caïque* with its admirably trained rowers, accompanied by a numerous flotilla, the imperial banner float-



ing in the breeze above the blue waters of the Bosphorus.

It was during my second visit to Turkey, namely, on May 29, 1876, that, just before daylight, Constantinople was aroused by the firing of signal-guns at Dolma Baghtchi, the quarter on the European side of the Bosphorus where stands the marble palace of the Sultan. As it was not a fête or memorial day, and as no man-of-war with a foreign potentate on board was expected or could arrive at that early hour, this sudden booming of guns excited a good deal of curiosity. In a short time the streets began to bustle with gathering crowds, and the cafés and clubs to be filled with occupants, all inquiring for news, and no one able to afford information. Something, doubtless, had occurred of unusual importance and enveloped in mystery. The public were not kept long in suspense. Placards appeared upon the walls, and a proclamation was issued announcing the startling fact that the Sultan, Ábdul-Ázīz, had been arrested in his palace during the night, deposed, and his nephew, Murad Effendi, placed upon the throne!

So cleverly and secretly had the whole affair been managed, that not a suspicion of coming events had been roused in any quarter.

The chief conspirators in this affair were Hussein



Avnei Pasha, Midhat Pasha, and Redif Pasha, the last of whom carried the plot into execution.

The dethroned Sultan had been conveyed in the darkness across the Bosphorus to a guarded palace, prepared for his reception at Seraglio Point, simultaneously with the passage of boats containing the new Sultan and his escort to the palace of his predecessor. Ten days after this event, and while the self-imposed Government was busy in devising schemes for the security of the new sovereign against the expected intrigues of the friends of Ábdul-Áziz for his restoration to power, that miserable and half-mad sovereign put an end to his life by cutting open the veins of his wrists with a pair of scissors borrowed from his mother for the alleged purpose of trimming his finger-nails. This, at least, is the account generally accepted as the true one, but an impression largely prevails that Ábdul-Áziz 'fell a victim to the convenience of those who deposed him from the throne.' This event was, politically, a great relief to the public mind, as it removed from the scene an obstacle which might have led to the most disastrous consequences.

But two other acts in this historical drama were yet to be played. Murad, a young and inexperienced prince, whose faculties were impaired by drink and other excesses, was soon found to be incapable of



maintaining his seat on the throne with either safety or dignity to the State. He was therefore induced by his self-appointed Ministers to abdicate in favour of his brother, Abdul Hamid, the present Sovereign. Ábdul-Ázīz's death occurred on June 16. On August 31 following, whilst the Ministers of the Porte were assembled in council at the house of Midhat Pasha, a Circassian named Tcherkess Hassan, a relation of the mother of the deceased Sultan, mad for vengeance upon the conspirators in the late affair, forced his way past the guards and doorkeepers of the apartment, and entered the room. He was armed with four revolvers, two in his boots, and one in each hand. With scarcely a word of warning, he despatched Hussein Avnei Pasha, the Grand Vizier, and Reshed Pasha, his third intended victim, Keiserlei Achmet Pasha, escaping with his life, but badly wounded. In the *mélée* seven persons were killed and eight wounded, among the latter being the Minister of Marine. Tcherkess was himself wounded before he could be arrested. On the following day he was hanged, after limping to the gallows and assisting with his own hands to adjust the rope around his neck.

The present Sultan, Abdul Hamid, as compared with his uncle, is, in personal appearance and character, his precise opposite. With an attenuated,



slightly-stooping body, and a weak face, he excites a certain degree of respect by the honesty of his expression, which indicates his character, but has no trace of sovereign dignity. I have seen a shopkeeper in a draper's shop in Pera, not unlike the Sultan in face and figure, who surpassed him in dignified appearance. He is timid and nervous, and during the period of my sojourn at Constantinople lived in his *kiosque* on the hill, surrounded by a bodyguard, in preference to the magnificent palace on the Bosphorus, associated as the latter was with the act of violence committed upon his predecessor, and exposed to attack from its undefended position. It was in that palace, however, that the Sultan held his official receptions, and where I had the honour of being presented.

It was on the occasion when Mr. Maynard, the newly - arrived American Minister, presented his credentials. The contrast between our legations abroad and the pompous display — especially in Oriental courts—of the foreign ambassadors in their embroidered costumes of gold lace, overhung with decorations, and surrounded by a staff of secretaries and *attachés*, is rather startling to the European eye. A sovereign like the Sultan of Turkey finds it difficult to understand why a country of sixty millions of people, in wealth and power far outstripping



many of the States of Europe, does not find it fitting to be represented abroad on a more liberal scale, and with more brilliant externals. Explain it as we will, the Oriental diplomatist maintains that the appearance of the American Minister in a plain black coat and white cravat is not calculated to inspire that respect and deference on the part of the beholder which the other foreign representatives obtain.

Democratic as Maynard was in habit and feeling, he was sufficiently ambitious to make 'some sort of a show' by increasing his attenuated staff on this his Excellency's first appearance at Court, and at his invitation I joined it. My colleagues on the occasion were the Hon. Eugene Schuyler, the secretary; Mr. Maynard's son, who acted as *attaché*; and the dragoman of the Legation. Though not an imposing staff, it 'passed muster.'

The Sultan wore a black-braided coat and red fez. His manner was without a shade of ostentation, but rather that of a quiet gentleman, shy, and not wholly at his ease. His observations were brief and confined to the formalities of the occasion, and he appeared to be relieved when he bowed us out of 'the presence.' The dragoman told me that his Majesty asked him in Turkish—alluding to Maynard's long black hair, brushed behind his ears, and



his solemnity of manner—if ‘the American Minister was not a *dervish* in his own country.’

From the grand reception-room we were ushered into a very orientally attractive apartment, where we were served with coffee and pipes. As it is incumbent on such occasions to decline nothing in the way of hospitality, I was curious to know what Maynard—who was a religious disciplinarian and an abstainer from smoking—would do with his tobacco-pipe. He went so far as to put the amber mouth-piece to his lips, but no smoke issued from them. A good story is told of some of our naval officers, who, on a similar occasion, assuming that the costly jewelled pipes were an imperial gift, pocketed them, and did not discover their mistake until a boat from the palace overhauled them on their way to the frigate, and the pipes were recaptured and brought back to the palace.

I have referred to the timid and nervous character of Abdul Hamid. As I was one day sitting in a dentist’s chair in Pera, a mounted messenger clattered up to the street-door, and sent in a large square envelope stamped with the imperial arms. It contained an order for the immediate attendance of the dentist at the palace. ‘I shall have to give you another appointment,’ said the operator. ‘His Majesty has got a toothache, and I



must go to him at once; but it will be the same story over again, and when I get there, he will refuse to have the tooth extracted. I have been to him repeatedly on the same errand, but when I take my instrument in hand, he shrinks like a child from the operation.' On my next visit to the dentist's, I inquired what was the result of his professional call at the palace, and learned that the necessary courage—which one would suppose to be a characteristic of the 'Shadow of God on earth'—was still wanting, and that the tooth remained unextracted in his Majesty's jaw.

Enough has been said to show that the reigning Sultan of Turkey has, as yet, displayed no signal proof of determined character. His political life has thus far been colourless, but circumstances may arise, as is often the case with such personages, which may bring into relief innate qualities now not apparent. His early life, under the suspicious and oppressive control of his uncle, *Ábdul-Ázīz*, was a drawback to his aspirations, if he ever had them. Although Hamid Effendi was not probably regarded by his uncle as a likely successor to the throne, the young man was watched with a jealous eye, and every attempt on his part to advance in a social or intellectual career was steadily repressed. Especially jealous of foreign influence, *Ábdul-Ázīz* forbade his



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nephew to travel abroad or to acquire foreign languages or ideas. He picked up a little French, but had few opportunities to practise it or to indulge ideas—then widely spreading—which were popular with the *jeunesse dorée* of the capital. It is a satisfaction, however, to know that he has, since his accession, acquired considerable political knowledge, and that he is not an impatient listener to the counsels, perpetually dinned into his ears, by the ambassadors of the Great Powers.



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## EVENTS AT BROUSSA.

DURING the enactment of the first scene of the imperial drama at Constantinople—the deposition of the Sultan, Ábdul-Ázīz—I happened to be making a visit to my friend, Dr. Zohrab Bey, the proprietor of a ‘model farm’ near Broussa, the ancient capital of Turkey. The trip thither is an interesting one, and should be taken more frequently than it is by tourists who visit Constantinople. Crossing the Sea of Marmora on a lovely May morning, in a Turkish steamer, we landed, after a six hours’ trip, at Mondania, a small sea-port town, where a carriage had been sent to meet me by my hospitable host. The drive thence to the farm occupied between two and three hours. The road, contrary to my expectations in the heart of Turkey, afforded a succession of rural scenes—pasture and meadow lands, green valleys, abundant foliage, and picturesque-looking peasants working in the fields or plodding along the



highway with their creaking, old-fashioned bullock-carts and comely cattle. In the distance loomed the purple slopes of Mount Olympus,\* 9,000 feet high and crowned with snow, at the extremity of which lies the little town of Broussa, with its minarets and green-domed mosques piercing the cloudless and transparent atmosphere. At one point of view, where the road reached a considerable elevation, I was strongly reminded of the fine valley of Worcestershire, as seen from the road to Malvern Wells. The railway, which was built for the use of the Sultan, between Mondania and Broussa, and which runs parallel to the carriage-road in many parts, is, or was at the time I refer to, in disuse; in fact, impracticable, as the rails for miles had sunk into the soil, on one side or the other, and lay buried under accumulated weeds and gravel. It offered a fair illustration of the jobbing system of old days, when—availing themselves of the mismanagement and corruption of the Government—foreign contractors made their own terms, and furnished the poorest material and the worst work for the largest amount of Turkish gold squeezed out of a depleted Treasury. But the most remarkable thing about this railway, and for which the contractor was not re-

\* Not the Mount Olympus of Homer, which latter is situated in Thessaly.



sponsible, was its totally unnecessary length in miles and its serpentine course. Whenever a bit of water or an elevation came in its way, the rails made a curve to avoid bridges or tunnelling, time, distance, and expense being considered of no consequence in comparison with the religious principle which guided this circuitous proceeding. That principle is that for man to interfere with the works of Nature is a defiance of God. Every effort, it was said, had been made to induce the Government to take a practical and common-sense view of the matter, and to allow the rails to be laid in as direct a line as circumstances would permit, but in vain. The Sultan, in the name of Allah, forbade the desecration of the Koran to gratify Christian bigotry and Christian ideas of engineering, and so, following the graceful curve of the Moslem crescent, Nature triumphed over art.

We had a good hour after my arrival to walk over the famous farm and inspect it thoroughly, my host taking infinite delight in pointing out every modern improvement introduced in farm, stables, and building. Zohrab, the son of an Armenian father and a Scotch mother, had been educated from boyhood in Edinburgh, and there took his degree as a physician. But for his crimson fez, he would have passed for an out-and-out Scotchman, having the accent as well as the physique of a Highlander. Generous, warm-



hearted, and simple-natured, he was universally esteemed for his honest worth and good fellowship. For many years he was physician to the late Khedive of Egypt, Ismail Pasha, and won his confidence to such a degree that he was selected as the travelling companion of the young Prince, and on his retirement from service was presented by the Viceroy with this large and valuable property near Broussa. There Zohrab undertook to create a model farm, not only for his own amusement and benefit, but in the hope of being able to induce his Turkish neighbours to improve upon their antiquated and laborious system. At considerable personal expense he introduced all the modern improvements in agriculture, importing from England and the United States every patented labour-saving machine in vogue, including steam-ploughs, sowing, mowing, reaping, and other machines. So far as his neighbours were concerned, the experiment was a failure; for to attempt to change Oriental habits or to induce the slow-moving Turk to spend extra money in the first instance, with a view to larger profits later on, is to attempt to change the natural instincts and character of the Mussulman.

Zohrab was a bachelor, and his sister—a widow—Madame Sandison,\* kept house for him. It was a

\* She was the mother of Sir Alfred Sandison, for many years the chief dragoman of the British Embassy at Constantinople.



spacious old-fashioned building, and at the time of my visit the family circle was enlivened by the presence of two nieces of Madame, one married to an Italian, and who was kind enough, on the day after my arrival, to present her husband with a baby-boy, and to come down a few days after to the dinner-table as if nothing of the kind had occurred. Among other plans for my entertainment, a party was made up, consisting of the English Consul and other gentlemen, for the ascent of Mount Olympus; but the day appointed being oppressively hot, I declined, and the others went up without me. I had, besides, some doubt as to the safety of the enterprise, for although the rest of the party did not share these fears, I had evidence enough, before leaving Constantinople, of the prevailing discontent of the lower orders, and their increasing ill-will towards foreigners. How far, if at all, this feeling existed in the interior of Turkey I did not know, but as it turned out there were good reasons for the exercise of prudence. On the very day of the excursion, we at the farmhouse were thrown into consternation by the report that two nephews of Zohrab Bey—one an Italian—who were visiting a farmhouse a few miles distant, had been shot at, while taking a walk, by Turks in ambush, and that one was wounded. Our host made instant preparations to go with a



party in search of the missing men, in which I proposed to be one; but the Doctor, now fully awake to the danger which existed, forbade me to leave the place, or even to wander in the grounds. Before they could collect the dogs and prepare the guns, other messengers arrived, and full details—worse than were expected—reached us. The two young men, while sitting on the grass in a solitary place in the gorge of the mountain, were suddenly fired upon by Turks concealed behind the trees in the high land above them. One of the young gentlemen was wounded, and the other took him up and managed to walk a few rods, when the wounded man exclaimed that he could go no further, and fell exhausted to the ground. His companion fled at his utmost speed to obtain assistance, narrowly escaping death, as the miscreants continued to fire upon them. On reaching the road, he met the English party returning from their excursion to Mount Olympus, and the whole went at once to the spot where the wounded man had been left. They found him dead. Six shots had entered the body, which, after his friend left, had been attacked by the Turks and cruelly mutilated. The throat had been severed with knives, the skull cut open, and one hand cut off. This was carrying out with a vengeance the decree of the Koran, which not only declares that the infidel



enemy shall be killed, but that his body shall be 'destroyed.'

The excitement created by this event in Broussa and its vicinity continued for many days. Every effort was made, or appeared to be made, by the authorities to trace the murderers, but although many suspicious characters were arrested, none were brought to trial. The Italian Consul was indefatigable in his attempts to reach the authors of the crime, but with no success; nor was there a clue afforded showing any personal motive for the act. Neither of the gentlemen attacked was obnoxious to the Turks individually, and the murder had to be ascribed to the popular prejudice existing at the time against foreigners. Zohrab Bey feared—and not without reason—that he and his household were in danger. Personally, he was popular with the natives, and had never been molested; still, he was not recognised as being one of themselves, and was known to be a Christian who harboured 'infidels' in his house. It was also known that he generally kept money in the house, which, being in an isolated position, was available for attack. He was especially anxious for the safety of his guest, myself, and watched me closely lest I should expose myself by wandering about the grounds. At night the doors and windows were carefully secured, and a portion of the household



took turns in keeping guard. Each of us had a gun or pistol ready for any emergency. Everything passed off, however, without further alarm. Thus I remained, virtually a prisoner, on the hospitable farm, waiting only a safe opportunity to return to Constantinople. Then came an event which turned public attention into another channel. One fine morning the telegraphic report of the deposition of the Sultan aroused Broussa and its neighbourhood to the greatest pitch of excitement. My curiosity for details, as well as to observe the effect of the news upon the townspeople, induced Zohrab to accompany me to Broussa, a carriage drive of three miles. On our way we passed the mineral-bath establishment and hotels, which give to Broussa its notoriety as a watering-place, and which are largely frequented during the spring and autumn by the well-to-do Turks from Constantinople.

Broussa is an interesting place to visit, for, apart from its historical associations, it is the seat of a large silk industry, and has one or two ancient mosques well worth inspecting. From a distance the domes and minarets, mingling with a luxuriant foliage, are picturesque; but the town itself, like most towns in the interior of Turkey, is dull and commonplace. We found it exceptionally lively on the morning of our visit, as, by order from headquarters,



the celebration of the accession of the new Sultan to the throne was proceeding. The public square, round which were filed the troops in martial array, was filled with the populace, while the band at intervals poured forth the national air, to the intense gratification of the faithful, as well as of the Armenians and Greeks who make up the medley population of the town. In the presence of the Turkish Governor and authorities the imperial decree was read, followed by prayer. The hatred to the foreigner was, at least for the time being, in abeyance, and Dr. Zohrab and his American guest were welcomed with hearty words by all his numerous acquaintance. My host presented me to the Governor and the chief men of the town, and we conversed freely upon the political situation. The general impression was one of satisfaction at the deposition of Ábdul Ázīz, whose dogmatism, eccentricities, and lavish expenditure of the public money—or, rather, hoarding of the revenues for his personal uses—had rendered him unpopular with the larger proportion of his subjects. As to the new Sultan, very few people had ever heard of him before, and they withheld their opinion. ‘*Bak-a-loom*’ (‘We shall see’), they said, and left the result to ‘Kismet.’

On our return to the farm, Zohrab expressed the opinion that, public attention being now diverted



from the foreigner, it was a good time for me to return to Constantinople. I thought so too, and was anxious to be back and ascertain how far my business with the Government might be affected by the new order of things. I would have preferred to go without any guard, but the Doctor was so nervously anxious as to my safety on the road to Mondania, that nothing would satisfy him but a closed carriage with a pair of his fleetest horses, a driver armed *cap-à-pie*, and a mounted guard each side of the vehicle. All went well. We passed on the road some scowling Turks of the lower orders, who, as we flew by them, skulked away, but no incident occurred. On my arrival at Constantinople the 'great news' of the day absorbed universal attention, and my visit to Broussa soon faded away among the memories of the past.



## CHAPTER XXIX.

## THE HAREM.

ONE of the least understood things in Turkey is the institution of the harem, which is generally brought forward by foreigners in evidence of the profligacy of Turkish men and women. The Turk is not a sensualist by nature, and is remarkable for his abstemious and temperate habits ; and his household, exaggerated as the statement may appear, is a model of domestic peace and of womanly virtue. I do not say that the last-mentioned quality arises from any elevated or educated notions of the proper sphere of woman—quite the reverse ; but it is the result of a principle, as old as the foundation of the Empire, that woman, as the natural servitor of man, must be kept physically pure, or she becomes utterly and irretrievably lost. Hence the bodily restraint put upon her. The old ideas of the master of the harem, and the throwing of the handkerchief, must no longer be entertained, for although it is



true that the married Turk has free access to the harem, and can violate its privacy if he sees fit to do so, he does it at the peril of exciting the jealousy of his wife and concubines. The women of the harem are not slaves procured for the sensual gratification of the man, but they form the retinue or suite of the wife, being increased or decreased in number according to her ability to keep up this luxury. The education of the women of the harem seldom goes beyond the most elementary instruction in reading and the strumming of the piano. Idleness, and often scandal and loose small-talk, together with much eating of sweets, to the neglect of wholesome food and exercise, are the chief evils of the harem. If the girls have any pretensions to good looks, husbands and a *dot* are not infrequently found for them before they reach their prime, but from their sedentary lives they soon become flabby in flesh and heavy-eyed. A foreign dentist who made regular professional visits at the palace told me that owing to the habits just mentioned, and the neglect of the tooth-brush, the condition of the gums and teeth of the women was sometimes too disgusting to describe.

One sees the women of the harem in the streets, or at the Valley of the Sweet Waters, on a fine afternoon, sitting with the windows of the carriage



open, and through their thin *yashmaks* not infrequently courting, rather than avoiding, the gaze of the foreigner. When the black eunuch who is seated on the box with the coachman, or riding at the side of the carriage, happens to have his attention diverted elsewhere, the fair occupant within may go so far as to smile upon the stranger who is gratifying his curiosity by peering in upon her, and she may fling to him a flower from her bouquet to add to his gratification. Upon these little *coquetteries* the uninitiated foreigner builds up an immense structure of belief that, with skilful management, further favours may be accorded him. He may go back to his hotel—I have known more than one instance of the kind—and, making a confidant of the dragoman attached to the establishment, employ him with a liberal supply of *backsheish* to carry out the intrigue. The dragoman knows the futility of any attempt of the sort, but if he be sufficiently demoralized to gratify the guest by playing upon his credulity, so much is very easily accomplished. I have heard of the boasts of certain young Englishmen and Americans who, when narrating their Constantinopolitan adventures, declared that they had enjoyed a midnight *tête-à-tête* with a Turkish woman. I would venture to inform such a one that he has done nothing of the kind. He may honestly believe



that he has, but in that case he has been duped, and it is most likely that it was an Armenian or a Greek woman, costumed for the occasion—a common trick—who has been palmed off upon him for the genuine article. The Turkish female, however low or ‘larky,’ is invisible to the profane eyes of the infidel of the other sex, even if occasionally not so to the true believer ; and no one, least of all herself, would dare to promote such an intrigue if he or she valued life or reputation. The Mohammedan woman, however much she may sin in the eyes of her own country people, would sooner throw herself into the Bosphorus than into the arms of a Christian ; and she could no more follow the loose practices of the Christian woman of dissolute life than she could impale herself alive in the public thoroughfare.

I never knew but one man whose account of an amorous adventure with a Turkish female had an air of probability, and he, although of foreign parentage, was born and educated in Constantinople, spoke the native language, and associated with the *jeunesse dorée* of that gay capital. He was on one occasion my sole companion in a railway carriage, during a journey from Constantinople to Vienna, and noticing when he took off his gloves that both his hands were scarred, as if recently wounded, I asked if he had met with an accident. At first he evaded the



question, but, growing more communicative, he gave me a most thrilling account of a night adventure at a pacha's palace, the end of which was that, being alarmed while enjoying the society of 'the favourite' of the harem, he had jumped out of the window, cutting both hands severely with the broken glass. As he noticed an expression of incredulity on my countenance, he became more confidential, and gave me the name of the pasha, the position of the palace-window, the wall upon which he had alighted, and other details.

On my return to Constantinople, I had the curiosity to test the exactitude of his statements by a personal inspection of the premises from the street below. To my surprise, I found that the adventurous youth had under, rather than over, stated the facts of the case; for to have made his escape in the manner described he must have taken a flying leap through the night air of some thirty feet, struck a stone wall, and bounded therefrom another ten feet to the street pavement.

The interior of a harem has become familiar from the descriptions of foreign ladies who have been presented to the wives of Turkish pashas and ministers. There is much sameness in these formal visits, and the curiosity of the stranger is soon gratified. What my wife especially noticed when she visited a



*harmelic* was the entire subordination of the concubines to the wife, as mistress of the establishment. The former generally appeared in shabby *déshabille*, whilst the latter received the guests attired in all the glory of silks and colours. The curiosity of the women to examine and finger the apparel of the foreigner knew no bounds, and the questions asked were as numerous as they were frivolous. It was impossible to get them upon a higher theme. As to the country from which the foreign lady came, or the characteristics of its people, no curiosity seemed to exist. Their map, if such a thing ever finds its way into a harem, describes simply the territory of Turkey. This is their world, and beyond it is primitive barbarism. My wife was on one occasion visiting a Turkish lady when the wife of a foreign ambassador was present, and she was much amused at the efforts of the latter to impress upon the hostess her own important official position. 'You have heard of a *queen*, I suppose? Very well; I am the same as a queen.' This startling announcement, however, fell flat upon the unappreciative lady of the harem. Ignorant as they are of foreign ways and customs, Turkish ladies have learned, by the appearance of the foreign visitor when calling upon them, and by familiarity with the costumes in the street, that the veil is worn to keep off only the sun and the dust—



*not* the unhallowed gaze of the other sex ; and they cannot in the least understand why this immoral and disgraceful exposure of the 'female face divine' is permitted by people who pretend to be virtuous. Their husbands have probably told them, in the seclusion of the harem, what shocking scenes they have been forced to witness when attending, by virtue of their position, the official balls at the foreign embassies ; and the narration must have driven even the artificial rouge from their faces. I have often studied the calm, composed countenance of some pasha as he surveyed the crowd of waltzers, and wondered what reflections were passing in his mind as he saw ladies, *décolletée* beyond disguise, spinning around the rooms in graceful *abandon* in the embraces of gentlemen whose personal acquaintance they may have made but a moment before. Such a spectacle, from *his* point of view, must confirm him in the opinion that the system of female seclusion as practised in the harem, the *yashmak*, the latticed windows, and the supervision of the protecting eunuch, is infinitely preferable—as a preservative of female chastity—to these open violations of decency on the part of the infidel foreigner. If you tell his highness that the moral education of our women is, as experience proves, a better safeguard than bars and bolts, he may grant that it is so under



certain conditions; but if he is acquainted with foreign statistics, he may call your attention to the records of the divorce courts, and of the societies for the suppression of immorality, and ask: 'What supports the millions of young women in all the great Christian cities, who, without earning a penny by honest industry, walk the streets at night in silken attire, and wean from the classes that seduced them the husband from his wife, and the young man from the society of the virtuous?'

'We have a proverb,' his highness might add, 'that "a worm in a horseradish root finds it sweet, knowing no other food."' The Turkish woman is contented with her life, uneventful as it is, because she is ignorant of the temptations and excitements of our cities. 'Why decry our domestic institutions,' says the Turk, 'when you have so little to show in public morality superior to them?'

Thus we see at the present day the curious spectacle of two counter-currents attempting to force their way into the social life of the world. Whilst the civilization of the West is awakening to the consideration of the question whether women shall be still further emancipated from the conventional restrictions of their present position, with which—free as they are to reign and rule as queens in the domestic household and in society—so many of them



are dissatisfied, the Eastern potentates are striving to suppress the yearnings of the women of the harem for greater liberty of action in the way of dress, manners, and publicity, and are stringently enforcing the old regulations, which forbid thin *yashmaks*, French toilettes, and their appearance on foot outside the limits of the harem and its garden.

When these extreme views of the Christian world on the one side, and the Mohammedan world on the other side, give way to the *juste milieu* of common-sense ; when woman with us appreciates the power which she possesses, as the handmaiden of man, to soften his asperities, to teach love and humility to her children, and to shed over the domestic household the grace and purity of her pure womanly presence—‘in that stillness which most becomes a woman, calm and holy, sitting by the fireside of the house feeding its flame’ and leaving politics and the rougher duties of life to her husband’s more fitting hands ; and when, on the other hand, the women of the Orient are helped to rise from their lassitude and servility to a position somewhat approximating to that of their sisters in Christendom, then shall women find more to respect in themselves, and more to command, in respect, love, and devotion, from others.



## CHAPTER XXX.

### WHITE SLAVERY IN TURKEY.

DOES the traffic in white Georgian and Circassian slave-girls exist at present in the Ottoman Empire ?

Probably this question would be answered by a universal 'No,' not only by those who have but a general and outside acquaintance with that land of mystery and concealment, but by those who have the advantage of personal experience and observation by long residence therein. I do not pretend to say how far the 'reforms,' so constantly insisted upon by the Great Powers, and so readily promised by the Sublime Porte, are nowadays carried out, or if the pompous *Iradsés*, *Hatti-humayouns*, and other imperial decrees of his Majesty the Sultan, are as frequently the 'dead letters' they proved to be when I resided at Constantinople ; but the narration of an incident which occurred within my own personal observation during my first visit to that city may throw some light upon the subject and be of interest



to the general reader, now that public attention is being directed to the question of slave-dealing in Africa by the co-operative efforts of England and Germany to check the infamous traffic in human flesh, and the recent 'Decree' of the Sultan prohibiting such traffic throughout the Turkish dominion.

When I was in Constantinople on a pleasure visit, and under circumstances that enabled me to accept official courtesies from the Government, which greatly contributed to assist me in the arduous work of sight-seeing, I was, in the absence of the then American Minister, Mr. Morris, 'taken in charge' by the secretary and dragoman of the Legation, under whose auspices I visited almost every place of public interest in that unique and remarkable city. A better guide or a more indefatigable companion I could not have found. Not only did he speak the native language as fluently as his own, but he probably knew more about Turkey and the Turks—before and behind the scenes—than any other foreign resident in the place; and he was himself familiarly known by the Sultan and his Ministers, down to the boatmen who plied their *caïques* on the Bosphorus.

Among other matters for investigation, I was anxious to ascertain the exact truth with respect to slave-dealing in Turkey, especially the traffic in



white slaves ; for, although it was declared to have been extinct for years, I had my doubts on the subject. Fortunately, an opportunity occurred for testing the fact. I was sitting one evening in a café with the dragoman, discussing, as it chanced, this very topic. Brown assured me that the traffic, since its declared illegality, no longer existed. I do not know where I got the idea that it was still carried on, surreptitiously, but I obstinately held to my own views. Just then a well-dressed official-looking individual entered the café, and the dragoman beckoned him towards us, introduced me, and invited him to join us at our coffee, remarking to me that he was one of the best authorities I could have on the subject, being a Circassian Government agent, and that I should find he fully confirmed his, Brown's, views. As he did not speak any language but his own, Brown did the interpreting.

The stranger wore the Circassian or Tscherkesse costume—an embroidered straight-bodied military coat, having across the breast a row of cartridge pockets like a walking battery. He was a man of middle age, with a fierce moustache, but a benevolent countenance. In reply to the dragoman's question, he said that the statement he had made to me was quite correct. The dealing in white slaves was now a capital offence, and for many years not a case of



the kind had occurred; in fact, 'slaves and slave-dealing were things of the past in Turkey.' The conversation soon turned to other matters, and, with many kind offers to be of any service in his power during my visit to Constantinople, he took leave of us.

A day or two after this interview, the dragoman came to me, somewhat excited, to say that the Circassian had been to see him, and said that, after thinking over the matter, he had decided, as an old acquaintance of Brown's, not to deceive his American friend in the matter I had expressed so much curiosity about. Was I discreet? And could I be trusted? The dragoman assured him that I could be trusted. Thereupon he stated that he himself had formerly been engaged in slave-dealing, and that 'even *now*' he occasionally did a little business in that line! Furthermore, he would be glad to oblige me—if I would like a little adventure and would be discreet—by taking us both to the 'only place in Constantinople' where white slave-girls were to be seen and sold. Brown was excessively astonished at this revelation, promised everything, and was as eager as I was to gratify his curiosity in the matter.

An arrangement was accordingly made for the expedition. Early one morning, long before the city was astir, we three drove over to Stamboul, and



thence through its entire length, until we reached a comparatively unfrequented quarter. There we dismissed the carriage, and proceeded on foot through a network of lanes running between shabby wooden buildings, common to the outskirts of Eastern cities, until we stood before a high, rambling, time-stained wooden house, full of windows, but with every shutter closed, as if uninhabited. The only access to the building seemed to be a low door, half sunk below the pavement, shrunken by age, and studded with heavy-headed nails. It was closely barred and bolted from within. At this door the Circassian knocked with the head of his walking-stick, the sound reverberating through the empty rooms, confirming the impression that it was unoccupied.

By prearrangement our guide was to appear in his character of 'agent.' I was to pass as a *hakim*, or foreign doctor, to pronounce upon the quality of the merchandise and to decide upon the purchase, and the dragoman was to act as my interpreter. We all wore the red Turkish fez. As the knocking produced no effect, it was repeated; and after standing for several minutes in utter silence, the Circassian stepped back into the street to inspect the building, directing his attention to a particular window-shutter in the extreme upper story. As no sign of life manifested itself, he placed his hands to his mouth, as if



to direct the sound to the window referred to, and whistled. Finally the shutters were cautiously opened about an inch apart, then a little wider, then to their full extent, and an old, wrinkle-faced hag thrust out her head to inspect the party below. Recognising the Circassian, she gained confidence, and, after a brief parley with him in Turkish, withdrew her head, closed the shutters, and descended noiselessly to the door to let us in. Having rebolted it, we were shown into a dark passage communicating with a shaky old staircase, uncarpeted and creaky, up which we proceeded in single file, led on by the wretched old woman, who, it appeared, was the proprietress of the establishment. Arrived at the third floor, she threw open a door, and stood aside that we might enter the room. It was perfectly dark, but the woman soon admitted the light from some side-windows, and placing three chairs in line, waved to us, with the grin of a toothless Gorgon, to seat ourselves. It was a wretchedly bare apartment. An old rug was spread upon the plank floor, and a frayed divan of enormous dimensions was stuck up against the wall; these, and a few chairs of various patterns, as if picked up at an auction, constituted the furniture of the room. The effect was rather depressing. However, I had not come as a guest, but on business, and was anxious to see the live stock, and to get out of the musty old



place so soon as my curiosity was satisfied. The lady of the house appeared to be disturbed at something, and kept up an incessant chattering with the Circassian, the purport of which the dragoman, who was listening, translated to me. It appeared that, for precaution's sake, and with an eye to the police, the Georgian and Circassian girls were for the most part distributed for safe keeping in various households in Stamboul—friends of the proprietress, who were in the secret; these families passing them off, in the meantime, as their own servants. The question was: Would our party wait until these slaves were brought to the house for our inspection, or would we examine the 'stock' then in the building, leaving the others for another day? The old woman was 'in despair' that the Circassian agent, acquainted as he was with the usual business procedure in such cases, had not given notice beforehand of our intended visit, then all would have been in readiness. Was I particular, she asked, about age, temperament, and size? She had a great variety, fat and thin, short and tall, active and languid, etc.

As the Circassian had not come on any apparent business of his own, but to oblige me, as a stranger, I could not bring myself to carry the farce so far as to have the women brought from the other houses for my inspection, so I declared myself content to



see those already in the house—at least, for this visit. Accordingly, the old woman went in search of them, most of the unfortunates being asleep at that early hour, in the back-rooms of the establishment.

Seven girls, ranging from sixteen to twenty years, candidates for the harem, and a small Nubian boy, intended for a house-servant, entered the room in solemn procession, and, arranging themselves in line in front of our three chairs, somewhat resembled a Sunday-school class waiting to be catechized. The first glance was extremely disappointing. I had expected to see in these females something approaching the Georgian or Circassian type of beauty, such as feeds the imagination in pictures and Oriental descriptions—that embodiment of languid and voluptuous beauty which poets delight to sing of and painters to portray. On the contrary, I saw only a row of rather plain-featured young women, wearing slovenly gowns of the most ordinary material, and reminding one more of Irish servant-girls than of Oriental *odalisques*. This was my first impression. On further inspection I perceived that the ill-fitting dresses were chiefly at fault, and that it would have been better had the dealer in these human beings consulted the artistic taste of the French shopkeepers in setting off her wares, *pour frapper les yeux*, in comely costumes, light gauze, flowing drapery, ornamental slippers, and the



like, rather than exhibited them in slop-shop clothes, which had no doubt done service to their predecessors before they exchanged the slave mart for the *négligé* elegance of the harem. As I more particularly examined them, I perceived what a remarkable transformation would result from such a change of dress, and one girl especially struck me as possessing, apart from the distraction of her unsightly calico gown—which was a mile too big for her graceful figure—many of the characteristics of the Oriental beauty. She was a little above the medium height, with a soft bloom upon her delicate rounded cheeks, regular features, dark expressive eyes, shaded by long lashes, full—perhaps rather too full lips, but which, when she smiled, displayed a perfect row of teeth as white as the cleft of a cocoanut. The bust was well developed, so far as could be guessed at through the gathered calico upon it, and an abundance of jet-black hair fell in a long mass over a well-turned neck and symmetrical shoulders.

The faces of the girls, as they stood motionless before us, had an anxious expression, as if they had had enough of this miserable, uncertain condition, and longed to exchange it for the ease and repose of a home. This cursory inspection over, the old hag, who had been watching me with keen eyes to detect any sign which promised business, suggested that if



any of the maidens appeared worthy of closer examination I should call them out of the rank. I at once beckoned to the one I have described to approach. At this her whole appearance changed. Smiling with delight, as if despair gave place to hope, she came forward as lightly and gracefully as a ballet dancer approaches the footlights to receive the applause of the audience ; then, with downcast eyes, she stood still, awaiting her inspection. Acting upon the suggestion of my Circassian Mentor—that I was not to forget my *rôle* of *hakim*, but to examine the merchandise in detail—I proceeded to lift the eyelids and examine the pupils ; to separate the lips and ascertain the condition of the teeth ; to pass my hands through the long and glossy hair ; and to manipulate the hands, which were clean and shapely. To all this she submitted with cheerfulness, and was no doubt building castles in her poor little unsophisticated brain, wherein soft couches, sandals, and the enveloping gauze of the Oriental costume played their parts.

I was conscience-smitten at the disappointment to which she was doomed, and, with almost a sigh of sympathy, I indicated that she could return to her place.

The small boy was then advanced—a bright little merry-eyed Nubian, as black as the ace of spades ;



but I made short work of him, and he went back into line with an air of disappointment.

My beauty, I noticed, had resumed her look of sadness, as if she feared that, after all, there was to be 'no sale.' To cheer her up, I began to chaffer with the old woman about terms of purchase—lowest cash price, guarantee of age, condition, etc.

'Five hundred Turkish liras, Effendi. Couldn't take less. Cheap at the price. The wife of a certain great pasha will be sure to take her at double the money the moment she sets eyes on her. Market very scarce, and a rise in prices certain. Where will you find such eyes as those, Effendi? Come, say five hundred Turkish liras, and it's a bargain.'

These ejaculations, or something like them, with frequent intermixtures of *Mashallah*, *Bismallah*, and so forth, the old slave-dealer uttered with the volubility peculiar to her class. The Circassian informed her that at present we were not prepared to conclude terms, but that if we decided to make a purchase he would duly inform her, so that a larger stock might be exhibited to select from. This she seemed to have expected, for not even a Turkish carpet is bought in Constantinople, except by uninitiated travellers, without repeated visits and an incalculable amount of haggling. Then the girls retired.

We had had our joke; but I did not intend that



the old woman should have only her trouble for her pains, and so 'tipped' her liberally, a portion of which she promised faithfully to divide among the slave-girls, but all of which, I fear, went into her own pocket.

When we got into the street, the dragoman said to me : ' We have seen to-day what not one foreigner in a million sees or believes to exist.' How far he was correct I cannot precisely say. At all events, I had then ocular proof of the existence of white slave-traffic in Turkey—a fact persistently ignored by the highest official authorities, as well as by hosts of philo-Turkish writers. Furthermore, I ascertained from reliable sources that this underhand trade in female white slaves went on with the knowledge and acquiescence of certain pashas ; and that many ladies of rank found amusement and profit in trading among themselves in Circassian girls, and sometimes in betting them, in lieu of money, at private gambling-tables.

As the morning had far advanced by the time we left the house of the slave-dealer, and the streets of Stamboul were alive with people, the Circassian deemed it prudent to part company with the two foreigners, and, under the plea of business, he went away in an opposite direction. I had a notion at the time that he went back to the slave-dealer's, possibly



to transact business with the old woman on his own account. I may have been mistaken, but as he had carried on a private and earnest conversation with her during our visit, and a certain familiarity existed between them which indicated an intimate acquaintanceship, my suspicions were not altogether groundless. The dragoman thought this 'very likely,' for the fact of this surreptitious trade being now fully established, it was highly probable that it was carried on more extensively than it appeared to be. He could not conceal his mortification at this discovery, and dwelt upon it as we proceeded homewards as if his personal reputation as a living encyclopædia of all things Turkish had received an irreparable blow.

As both he and the Circassian are no longer living, and many years have elapsed since this incident occurred, the 'discretion' imposed upon me as a condition for being made acquainted with the facts I have narrated is no longer obligatory.

Before returning to the hotel, after this adventure, my services as *hakim* were unexpectedly again called into requisition. This time it was a case of *le médecin malgré lui*. Accompanied by a Government *kavas*—kindly provided for my use—and by the indefatigable Brown, I had inspected the mosques and the Treasury, with its famous collection



of precious stones and royal relics at Seraglio Point, and from thence crossed the Bosphorus in a *caïque* to Scutari, on the Asiatic side, to witness the ceremonial of the so-called 'Howling Dervishes.' On coming out of the temple, either the *kavas*, or my fez, or both, attracted the attention of a group of Turks standing near the door, one of whom inquired of the dragoman who I was. Brown, to appease their curiosity, replied that I was simply a foreign doctor. But this information produced the opposite effect from what was intended.

A *hakim bashi*, in Oriental countries, is a man of consequence, and inspires among the ignorant classes something akin to reverence, from the idea that he is gifted with superlative wisdom. The Turks accordingly crowded about me, begging of Brown to be allowed to consult the great man on their various ailments. He thought I had better humour the idea than risk provoking them by exposing his deception. I therefore assumed a professional pose, and held a conference with each and all. They were most of them invalids, who had come to the temple to be cured or benefited by the laying on of hands by the Master Dervish. One was a sufferer from *migraine*, one from night-sweats, one from rheumatism, and so forth. A plethoric fellow who wore a green turban, in evidence of his having



kissed the stone of the Kebla, at Mecca, had perhaps kissed it too often, for his malady was stone in the bladder. I had to inform him that lithotomy was not within my practice, and sent him to a surgeon. For another, who complained of bad dreams, and seemed to have over-eaten himself, I prescribed one meal a day for a week, and no more hot suppers. I have no doubt he benefited from that course of treatment. They were all charmed by my scientific skill—especially as I did not demand a fee—and salaamed me with great reverence when I went away. ‘There’s nothing like *faith*, monsieur,’ as a lame beggar, who had plied his trade for years near the miraculous fountain at Lourdes, once remarked to me. I asked him why, then, he had not been cured long ago by washing in the sacred stream. ‘Ah, monsieur, I *haven’t got* the faith; that’s where it is.’ These poor Turks had it, and were doubtless all the better for their consultation with the counterfeit *hakim*, which fact gives rise to the somewhat complex question, Is not deception a virtue when practised for the good of humanity? If the answer be ‘Yes,’ the Jesuit scores a point.



## CHAPTER XXXI.

## THE PRINCESS ZARINI.

AMONG Turkish women of rank, I gave the preference to the Princess Zarini, if for no other reason because she was the only Turkish woman of rank, or otherwise, whom I knew in the whole Empire. But there were other reasons. She was young, amiable, and amusing; she spoke English, and last, not least, she permitted me to visit her. To this very exceptional privilege I was indebted, not, unfortunately, to any personal interest on her part, but to the fact that I was the husband of my wife, in whom she did take a personal interest. But with the exception of a certain foreign ambassador—with whose wife also she was intimate—two Turkish relatives and myself, no one, I believe, bearing the semblance of manhood, was allowed to cross the sacred threshold of her *salon*. My visits to the Princess, as well as those of the ambassador, were of very rare occurrence; but even these brought down upon her fair



head a reprimand from high quarters, and rather than cause her this annoyance the visits were discontinued. The Princess, however, was inclined to disregard public opinion when it interfered with her own ideas, and she thought it rather hard to be deprived of the innocent little excitement of an occasional conversation, with the accompaniment of coffee and cigarettes, with two friends, her *dame de compagnie* being always present, even if the two friends did belong to the *genus homo*. One thing she would do despite Mohammedan ideas or Sultan's decrees, and that was to continue her visits to the wives of foreign ambassadors, and engage in the chit-chat of their drawing-rooms with the other ladies present, of course wearing her *yashmak*. 'Why should she not do so? Was not her own husband an ambassador in a foreign country, and did she not speak their language? Why should she pine at home with her women of the harem for her sole companions, when agreeable society and the gossip of *le beau monde* was within her reach?'

So the Princess was seen here and there, and being very popular wherever she went, nobody complained, and she was allowed to indulge in her little 'eccentricities.' I have brought her name up because she illustrated in a marked degree one of the chief characteristics of Turkish females—their



superstition. This was more remarkable in her case because, from her intercourse with foreigners and her acquaintance, though slight, with English literature, she ought in this respect to have been more enlightened. The Princess sent one day for my wife and I to come to her house to witness the 'manifestations,' at a private *séance*, of a little hump-backed dwarf, who picked up a living by fortune-telling, second-sight, and other supernatural gifts, at the houses of the wealthy classes. The Princess received us in her boudoir. She was tastefully dressed in a flowing *robe de chambre* of a light gauze material, with her face and neck bare, not like an Eastern princess, but a Parisian belle. If I remember rightly, the outer light was excluded from the room and replaced by lighted candles, to add to the supernatural effects about to be produced, and upon which the thoughts of our fair hostess seemed to be concentrated, for she was unusually pale and absent-minded. She was anxious too, she said, that the spiritualistic visions with which the little dwarf was to favour us should be successful; for her faith in her was very great, and she felt assured that, should a failure occur, it would be owing, not to her want of power, but to external influences which occasionally interfered with the free action of her mental faculties.



When the little sorceress appeared, she squatted down on the carpet in the centre of the circle around her, and went through her performances after the manner of such impostors. These consisted of fortune-telling with cards; the guessing of names written by us on slips of paper, but not exposed to view; and the description of persons thought of, but not named. Some of these 'guesses' were a little remarkable, as no clue was afforded; but as a whole it was a signal failure. The amusing part of the affair was the intense and serious interest exhibited by the Princess in each experiment, and her bitter disappointment at the result. But her faith in the supernatural gifts of the little dwarf was not in the least degree shaken, and she was ready with innumerable explanations to account for her 'want of power' on that particular day. 'The poor child had not been well of late; she was disturbed by the new faces around her; the names written by the strangers were in a foreign language, or the persons thought of by us were too far off; in fact, she was not *dans son assiette*, and we must give her another chance on another day, when she would be herself again.' But the vexation of our hostess passed away, like the smoke of her cigarette, when the refreshments were served, and we parted in extremely good spirits, promising, in response to her



earnest invitation to do so, to assist at a second *séance*.

On another occasion my wife lunched with the Princess, only lady guests being present, which entertainment she described as being in excellent taste both in the number and quality of the dishes and the table decorations. Although the party was a small one, there were fourteen female slaves in attendance, clad in flowing silk dresses, with fancy coloured kerchiefs draping their heads.

On leaving at a late hour in the afternoon, the Princess, as a crowning act of courtesy, insisted upon sending my wife home in her (the Princess's) carriage, drawn by a pair of especially fine horses, which were the pride of their mistress.

That night my wife was taken seriously ill; so critical, indeed, was her condition that the physician remained at the bedside until morning before he could pronounce that she was out of immediate danger. The case resembled acute cholera, and the inference was that she had partaken of some unwholesome or poisonous dish at the lunch-table. She had eaten so very moderately of the tempting repast that she had no difficulty in recalling to mind of what dishes she had partaken, and the only one likely to have been the cause of her illness was a delicate little *pâté*, containing a shellfish, probably a



mussel, which is much in vogue among the Turks, but which in this case may have been in contact with the copper on a ship's bottom.

On the following day my wife despatched a note to the Princess, informing her of her illness, and asking if she had heard of any other case of the kind having occurred among the guests.

The good lady was much distressed at the news, and sent back a note by her *dame de compagnie* full of expressions of sympathy. She had sent to inquire about the other guests, and all were well. She had also been herself to the mosque to offer up prayers for her sick friend, and to consult the Sheykh-ul-Islām, the highest religious authority in the empire. That holy man had been good enough to prepare a 'cure' for the invalid, which my wife would find enclosed in her note, and which she entreated her to take according to the prescription without delay. 'It was sure to do her good, had been often tried, and had never failed.' She, the Princess, was not very much surprised to hear of my wife's illness, for she had been forewarned of evil by an incident which had occurred the evening previous, and had been very anxious in consequence. One of the carriage-horses—the favourite one—on their return from taking my wife home, had fallen dead in the stable. It was clearly a case of 'Kismet' (fate), and could not have been



averted. This must be their consolation, especially as 'the death of the horse had averted all fatal consequences from my wife.'

This was the substance of the note, and I am sorry that I cannot copy it verbatim to give the reader an idea of the *naïveté* and sympathetic feeling with which it was written.

We could not laugh at it, or at the 'prescription'—ludicrous as it was—that was enclosed in the note, for we felt too deeply the kindness of her motive, to say nothing of the sympathy excited by the death of her beautiful horse. Even the lady who brought the note—an Englishwoman, who certainly must have secretly ridiculed the superstitious notions of the Princess—was as solemn and reserved as if she had been a messenger from the Queen of England.

The 'cure' consisted of three folded bits of paper, on each of which was written a text from the Koran. The prescription was as follows: One of the papers to be soaked in a glass of water, and the water to be drunk; the second paper was to be burned to ashes, and the ashes swallowed; and the third paper was to be attached to the under-clothing, and worn as a charm next to the breast.

The patient, anxious as she was to gratify the whims of her kind friend in all things reasonable, thought the soaked-paper water and the burnt



powder too much of a joke to swallow, and declined to do so ; but the last portion of the prescription she did follow—at least, long enough to say that she had done so ; and in a few days she had the satisfaction of informing the Princess in person of her perfect recovery.

On the death of the Princess's husband, during that year, there were rumours of her intended alliance with a certain ruling Prince of high blood ; but this purpose was abandoned, and she still lives in widowed meditation, fancy free.

The following lines, commonplace as they are, amused the Princess Zarini, to whom they were addressed, notwithstanding that I compare her to a ' wallflower,' which was not strictly in accordance with her mundane proclivities :

A wild-flower blooming on a moated wall ;  
A bright bird singing in a silent wood ;  
A strain of music in a vacant hall ;  
A lone star shining through a solitude.

Such art thou, Princess, save to those, the few  
Who, by rare privilege, have felt the spell  
Of thy sweet converse, when the moments flew  
Too swift betwixt the welcome and farewell.

Such art thou, O fair prisoner of fate  
And custom absolute ; which in thy land  
Do woman's sweetest influence isolate  
From social fellowship of speech and hand.



Would it were not so ; that the flower might grow  
In a fair garden, charming other flowers ;  
And that the bird, the star, the music's flow,  
Might mingle in this goodly world of ours !

This struggle against Nature : is it just ?  
This veil o'er woman's beauty : is it gain ?  
Her eyes were made to kindle human trust ;  
Her lips to prove man does not live in vain.



## CHAPTER XXXII.

## PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF FOUR RUSSIANS.

THE names of the Grand-Duke Nicolas, brother of the late and uncle of the present Emperor of Russia, and his brother, the Grand-Duke Constantine, recall to the public mind two distinguished men whose names are associated with the most prominent political and military events in Russia of recent years. This chapter will be confined simply to a few personal reminiscences of these two men, and of two other eminent Russians, the one distinguished by his valour in the field, the other by his diplomatic notoriety.

The elder of the two Grand-Dukes, Constantin-Nicolaïévitch, was born in 1827. Chief among his various titles were those of Grand Admiral, Aide-de-Camp General, and President of the Imperial Council. In these capacities he rendered distinguished services to his Government ; but his unconcealed sympathies with the Liberal party, and especially with the people



of Poland, created, on more than one occasion, a friction between the Grand-Duke and his illustrious brother. These, and other circumstances more or less known to the public, rendered his political and private life not altogether a bed of roses.

When I first knew him he was on a visit to his daughter at Athens, Queen Olga, and the impressions, then and subsequently, which he made upon me were those of a singularly well-informed mind, widely awake to the political and social movements of the world at large, and eagerly active in the pursuit of information from all with whom he came in contact. Free from the slightest shadow of hauteur; dignified, yet familiar, with all whom he cared to converse with; inquisitive, at times jocose; full of information, and ready to impart it beyond the verge of strict diplomatic reticence, I always looked forward to a meeting with his Highness, well assured that I should gain something from the interview beyond the empty banalities which usually form the subject of conversation between high personages and their inferiors in position. I also felt that, whether the interview was to be a mere exchange of daily compliments or the expression of views upon current topics, I must keep my wits about me, so sudden and unexpected might be the question or the remark to which I was called upon to respond.



As an example of this, his Highness on one occasion abruptly turned from the subject under discussion, and asked where a certain vessel of the United States navy was then stationed. I could not at the moment answer the question, but promised to consult the last naval report and let him know. The vessel in question was not in the European squadron, and I had not heard of her movements for a long time. He was greatly surprised at my want of information on the subject, and declared that, with that one exception, he could name the whereabouts of every vessel in the American and European service. I ventured to put his statement to the test; whereupon his Highness called off on his fingers vessel after vessel, their respective sizes, armaments, and present stations, until, no longer incredulous, I cried, 'Enough.' He seemed equally conversant with matters totally disconnected with those under his especial charge, and at the mention of a name prominent in diplomacy or in letters would pronounce an acute criticism upon, or give an apt illustration of, the individual named, as if he had made his characteristics a profound study.

That a man of such diversified resources could turn with facility from the grave occupations of his official position to the childish amusements of life, when such diversions were appropriate to the occasion, is



not astonishing. I remember at a country picnic given by their Majesties to the members of the Court and diplomatic circle, who were passing the summer at the island of Corfu, the Grand-Duke Constantin, leaving his official dignity to take care of itself at St. Petersburg, was the leading spirit in the romping games on that summer afternoon in a lovely and secluded spot a few miles from the town. He had a pleasant word and a quiet little joke for everybody, and when he engaged in a race or paid his penalty in a game of forfeits, one might have supposed him, from his dexterity and agility, to be one of the youngest, instead of one of the oldest of the party. During a pause in the amusements, his Highness proposed to run up to the top of a steep little peak of rock in the vicinity to see the view, and called to the King and myself, who chanced to be near him, to follow. This we did, and in a few minutes we were upon the summit; but the space being too limited for three to stand upon at a time, we were obliged to cling to each other to maintain our equilibrium. 'Never mind,' said the Grand-Duke, 'here we stand, the representatives of three nations, and from this eminence we can defy the world!' Scarcely were the words uttered than we illustrated the fallacy of 'ambition's boast,' for the foot of one of the party slipped, and the triple alliance came to an abrupt



dissolution, the *sauve qui peut* movement backwards down the declivity being accentuated by the ludicrous attempts of each to save his dignity and his nose from falling on the slippery rock.

A few evenings after this amusing incident, at a ball given by the King and Queen at the Government House in Corfu, we had another illustration of the instability of human greatness. The *parquet* floor of the ballroom had been waxed and polished to such an unnecessary degree that even the most practised dancers were obliged to keep their wits about them to maintain their footing, and, indeed, two or three falls had occurred during the round dances. I was standing with the Queen during one of the pauses of the waltz, and congratulating myself that, with such a fair burden on my arm, I had not imperilled her royal dignity in our repeated whirls over the glassy surface, when the Grand-Duke passed us leading out his partner for the waltz. I ventured a word of caution to his Highness as to the condition of the floor, remarking that one or two couples had already fallen. 'Never fear,' he answered laughingly; 'I can dance on an ice-pond.' He had scarcely accomplished half the circuit of the room, when up went his heels and down came his body—stars, ribbons, and all—with his partner on top of him. An Englishman or an American would have picked himself up



directly, and redeemed his character by proceeding with the dance as if nothing unusual had occurred, but not so H.I.H.; for he took the matter as much to heart as if a dynasty had fallen, and leading his partner back to her seat, danced no more for the rest of the evening.

His brother, the Grand-Duke Nicolas Nicolaïévitch, presented a somewhat different type of character. Without the excitable and nervous temperament of Constantin, genial but grave in his deportment, soldierly in bearing, as befits the position he held, he inspired in his intercourse with others a feeling of deference and dignified regard. Born in 1831, he was four years the junior of his brother. His principal titles were General of Engineers, Aide-de-Camp, Inspector-General of the Army, and President of the *Comité Suprême d'Organisation*. Of late years his name came prominently forward as Commander-in-Chief during the Russo-Turkish War.

It was at Constantinople in 1878 that, being engaged in the prosecution of an important matter of business with the Ottoman Government, it became necessary for me to have an interview with the Grand-Duke. The Russo-Turkish War was over; the city of the Sultan lay weakened and humiliated at the feet of her great Northern conqueror, and the streets of Pera, the Christian quarter of the city,



were gay with the uniforms of Russian officers, who enlivened the Grand Rue with their presence, and enriched the shopkeepers at the bazaar in Stamboul with Russian roubles in exchange for *bric-à-brac*, Turkish carpets, and Oriental embroideries. At San Stefano, a Turkish village an hour's distance by rail from Stamboul, 120,000 Russian troops were encamped, and the English fleet 'of observation,' despatched thither to prevent, if need be, the occupation of the capital by the Russian army, lay at anchor in Besica Bay, at, relatively, the same distance from Stamboul as were the Russian troops. In the Bosphorus, midway between the European and Asiatic shores, the *Lavadia*, a magnificent yacht floating the imperial flag of Russia, lay peacefully at her anchorage. On board of her was the Grand-Duke Nicolas, then in command of the Russian army in Turkey.

Ascertaining that H.I.H. generally lunched on board his yacht at noon, I proceeded thither in a *caïque*, an hour later, bearing a letter of introduction to him from Prince Labanoff, the Russian Ambassador. As I stepped on deck, I thought I had never seen a more elegant specimen of the yacht class of naval architecture and appointments than the *Lavadia* presented. Everything, of course, was spick and span, from topmast to water's edge, but the broad



sweep of the main deck, the oiled and shining spars, the ivory-white panelling, and the burnished brass mountings on cannon, capstan, and railing, presented an *ensemble* which could not be well surpassed. The officer at the gangway stated that the lunch-party were still at table, but that, the repast being over, he thought the Grand-Duke would see me, and he took my letter and card to the cabin. Almost immediately he returned with a message from his Highness inviting me to join him at table. This I begged to be permitted to decline, sending him word that, as my business was of a private character, I would be pleased to know when it would perfectly suit his convenience for me to call again. This was answered by the Grand-Duke in person, who, greeting me with extreme cordiality, renewed his invitation to go down with him below, saying that no one but his staff officers were present, and that we could converse at our ease. As I was disinclined to do so, he said: 'All right; let us sit down here, then,' namely, on the raised edge of the poop-deck, our feet resting on the deck below. 'Here we shall be entirely uninterrupted,' he continued, 'and I've nothing to do for an hour to come. I am always glad to see one of your countrymen. Now, what can I do for you?' Then he ordered coffee and cigars and awaited my communication.



This all looked very encouraging, but I was by no means sure that he would be inclined to afford me the information I desired ; first, because it related to the disposition of certain Turkish territory acquired by the Russians among the spoils of war, and which, not being fully determined upon, it might not be prudent to divulge ; and, secondly, because the business I had in hand concerned *English* interests, and it was hardly presumable that, under the then strained relations between the two countries, Russia would care to show her hand until the political arrangements in view were fully matured. In this opinion—so far as the Grand-Duke's revelations to myself were concerned—I was altogether mistaken. With perfect frankness he answered my questions, fully and without reserve, simply making it a condition that until the arrangements were made public I would consider his communication as strictly confidential. When this matter was disposed of, I rose to leave ; but, at his request, I remained for another half-hour, the conversation drifting into matters concerning the late war and the present condition of political affairs. It would appear as if—glad to be free for a few moments from the restraint of official routine, and the conventional intercourse imposed upon him by the foreign and uncongenial elements by which he was surrounded—he welcomed the



opportunity of a free and unrestrained conversation with one who was entirely independent of political prejudices and international questions such as then formed the chief topics of interest in Constantinople, from the Sultan's palace to the booth of the humblest shopkeeper. He seemed annoyed that he was not receiving from the English colony at Pera that official attention which his position deserved, and especially at the cold shoulder turned to him by the British Ambassador.

‘Why does he not call upon me?’ he asked, in an irritable tone. ‘Is Russia at war with England? Did we not enter upon this campaign only after every effort on the part of the Conference of the Powers failed to bring Turkey to accept a single proposition which would have averted it? It was perfectly well known that the folly and obstinacy of the Turks would result in war, and that not a single Power would come to her aid. We have conducted the war with the greatest moderation and prudence, being careful not to wound the susceptibilities of England. Are we here with sinister intentions, or as a victorious army making peace on honourable terms?’

I asked him why he did not enter Stamboul and make his terms there; he had the precedent of the Prussian occupation of Paris.



‘Oh, we had precedent enough,’ he replied, ‘but it would have set all Europe in a blaze.’

I asked the Grand-Duke if it were true that but for the approach of the English fleet to Constantinople, the treaty of peace would have been made at Adrianople.

‘Not *at* Adrianople, but near there, where the army halted. When the news reached us of the approach of the fleet, we met this menace on the part of a friendly Power by advancing the troops, and should have entered Stamboul had not the fleet withdrawn, by arrangement, to its present position at Besica Bay.’\*

I referred to the prevalent notion that Russia was aiming at the possession of Constantinople. His Highness smiled, and asked:

‘Are the United States aiming at the possession of Cuba?’

‘No.’

‘Would they willingly allow any other Power to hold it?’

‘Certainly not.’

‘Very well; that is precisely our position with respect to Constantinople. While things remain as

\* This statement was confirmed by two Russian ambassadors—Ignatieff and Labanoff—and by General Skobeleff, whom I separately questioned on the subject.



they are—save and excepting the closure of the Dardanelles to the passage of our naval vessels, a condition which no other nation similarly situated would endure—Russia is satisfied. If Constantinople is destined, like an over-ripe pear, to fall into somebody's lap, both the geographical and physical conditions of Russia forbid that, in such an event, it should belong to any other Power. There is, of course, a party in Russia favourable to the acquisition of Constantinople, as in your slavery days there was a party anxious for the possession of Cuba, but it is not an influential party. Constantinople could not become the southern capital of Russia without causing an immense depreciation of values in the north, a fact which the land and property owners there would view with the greatest alarm.'

'How about the claims of Greece to her ancient domain?' I ventured to ask.

'They are more sentimental than practical. Greece deserves, and will doubtless obtain in time, an extension of territory. We feel a good deal of sympathy with Greece, apart from the fact of the Greeks being our co-religionists.'

I turned the conversation to India.

'India? There is another popular fallacy, giving rise to the most absurd *espionage* on the part of England, and affording the opportunity, from members



of Parliament down to newspaper scribblers, to indulge in speculations and in warnings as to the supposed aggressive movements of Russia in that direction. This causes a good deal of amusement to our people ; but unfortunately it goes beyond this, and excites retaliation, and so the breach widens. India ! What do we want with that enormous empire of Hindoos and Mussulmans, who would require a standing army of Russians to keep them from revolt ? No ; our line of advance is in a different direction, and then only so far as our political interests demand it. The Russian Empire is large enough, and no English statesman, whose judgment is not blinded by prejudice, sincerely believes that Russian ambition seeks the acquisition of India.'

When I took my leave of the Grand-Duke, it was with the conviction that his observations were honestly made, with no concealed purpose of their being repeated for political effect, and that they reflected the opinions of the governing classes in Russia. I have often conversed with leading Russians, myself introducing these topics, and have found similar views expressed by them.

Sitting at breakfast one morning in the clubhouse at Pera, I noticed at another table Mr. MacGavan, the well-known American newspaper correspondent, who had accompanied the Russian army



through the campaign, and had achieved a high reputation for personal valour as well as for remarkable ability as a graphic describer of events. His companion at table was a military officer in uniform, who, when I exchanged bows with MacGavan, turned towards him as if asking who I was. In a few moments both gentlemen rose, and, coming to my table, MacGavan presented me to General Skobelev. He was a man I greatly desired to meet. The valour and splendid military renown of the hero of Plevna were in everybody's mouth, and he possessed a personal magnetism that won for him the friendship of friend and foe alike. A thorough soldier, his face informed one at the first glance that he was open as the day in his sentiments and democratic in his instincts. As to the men under his command, it would be difficult to say whether military respect or personal love for their commander proved the stronger motive for their admiration of him. A strict disciplinarian in camp, he had a friendly word or grasp of the hand for each and all of them. He did not *talk* to his men of personal bravery, but he set so conspicuous an example of it in his own fearless exposure to danger, that his officers were more nervously anxious for his safety than for their own.

A few days after, we met again by chance at the club-house, and Skobelev, being alone, insisted upon



my breakfasting with him, and ordered two bottles of champagne. In vain I protested that at that early hour I never drank champagne, but he would have it, and drank it like water, without the slightest perceptible effect. This is a Russian habit, and in Skobelev's case, I fear, led to excesses not altogether disconnected with his untimely death after his return to Russia. Like all his countrymen whom I have known, he talked with the utmost freedom. On military and political affairs he gave his opinions without reserve, and censured certain high officials among his countrymen to an imprudent degree. But even his censorious remarks left the impression on my mind that he spoke from conviction, and not from personal feeling. He pressed me to visit him in camp at San Stefano, and offered to send a mounted escort and horses to meet me on my arrival at the railway-station.

This honour I declined, but I went down to see him in the course of the week, and was treated with great hospitality. I arrived in the afternoon, and just before nightfall he took me over the camp. The men were preparing their evening meal around huge smoking caldrons; others were lying about at ease on the turf or in the tents. At the General's approach they started to their feet and stood at 'salute,' motionless as statues. With a pleasant



word to them, he passed on to show me the arrangements for the night. I expressed my surprise at the height of many of the men.

‘Oh, *these* are nothing,’ he replied; ‘come this way;’ and we advanced to a group of men sitting in a tent. These he called out by name—‘Strogenoff,’ ‘Polinoff,’ and so on—to stand up; and a file of men stood before us, not one of whom was less than six feet two. The appearance of this vast camp of soldiers ‘off duty,’ lying, standing, sitting about in groups, some sleeping in the oddest attitudes, or stretched out on their backs, open-mouthed and snoring, in their war-stained and weather-beaten uniforms, their sun-browned faces giving evidence of the toil and hardships of the campaign, was in some respects more impressive than when, a few days after this visit in the lurid light of the evening, I saw them in the blaze of noonday pass in review in all the perfection of thorough equipment and discipline.

Before General Skobeleff left Constantinople, he gave a reception at Pera to such of the foreign residents as had called upon him, or had extended civilities. Among these were many Englishmen, who, although their prejudices against Russia were accentuated by the recent successes of the Russian arms in Turkey, desired to take the hand of the gallant soldier who had won their admiration by his



military bearing and his winning social qualities. Skobelev appreciated this feeling very keenly, and was especially gratified when a prominent English official at Constantinople entered the room, especially as he was one whom he had reason to believe had vented his anti-Russian sentiments somewhat emphatically since the occupation of Turkey by the victorious army. Skobelev advanced to meet the unexpected guest, and shook him so warmly by the hand that the Englishman coloured to the eyebrows.

‘Don’t blush,’ said Skobelev, with his impetuous frankness; ‘there’s nothing to be ashamed of, and I’m heartily glad to see you.’

Before they parted every vestige of political prejudice was swept away from the mind of the English official, and a few days after Skobelev was his guest at dinner.

‘What rot it is,’ said the former to me when speaking of this incident, ‘this hatred of the Russians by my countrymen! If we only knew them better, we should appreciate them highly.’

The last communication I had with Skobelev was a note in Paris, regretting that he could not dine with me, as he had been suddenly summoned to St. Petersburg. On his arrival there he was called to account for his ‘imprudent, if not dangerous, pro-Slavic speeches’ at public assemblies. Skobelev



was of so frank and honest a nature, so utterly indifferent to public opinion, and imbued with so keen a sense of the claims of humanity in their widest significance, that he scorned the restraints of diplomatic reticence. What he felt to be a private or public injustice to others, cost what the avowal might to himself, he felt bound to declare and denounce.

There is a good deal of mystery concerning his death. It has been attributed to natural causes, but Madame Adam, the well-known French *feuilletoniste*, in her monograph of Skobeleff, declares that there exists evidence to prove that he was garrotted by German enemies.

The most notable diplomatist during my sojourn at Constantinople was General Count Ignatieff, a man of surprising acuteness of mind, a keen observer of events before and behind the political curtain, and who concealed his wonderful sagacity under an open frankness of speech which led to the universal opinion that he was totally unreliable for any statement he made on political affairs. As one of his witty colleagues put it: '*La vérité march toujours à côté d'Ignatieff.*' The opinion generally held was that what he said might be perfectly true or utterly false, certainly the latter if it related to any matter in which Russia was practically concerned. The consequence was that the gravest blunders were frequently



made by those who acted on this principle. Ignatieff was perfectly aware of the reputation he bore in this respect, and pretended to be excessively amused at it. He always asserted that he had no secrets, and was as candid and outspoken as a child. 'My fault is,' he once said to me, 'that I speak *too* plainly, and my excellent colleagues do not like it, and so do not believe it. But the Turks believe me, and know that I tell them the truth.'

Ignatieff was so wonderfully in advance of his colleagues in obtaining 'State secrets' at the Sublime Porte, and profiting therefrom, that he excited no little jealousy in political circles. He was never, I believe, caught napping but once, and then the whole diplomatic body, as well as the public at large, were in the same oblivious condition. That was when the Sultan Ábdul-Ázîz was deposed and Prince Murad was set upon the throne, as has been already described.

Being on excellent personal terms with the Russian Ambassador, and outside the circle of diplomatic intrigue, I was often indebted to him for very early and sometimes very interesting information. One day, as I was passing by the gate of the Embassy, I met Ignatieff coming out.

'What do you think,' he asked, 'of the condition of the Turkish finances?'



‘As bad as can be,’ I replied.

‘No; they can be worse. Come in, and I will explain.’

Taking me into his sanctum, he sat down at his writing-table, and with pencil and paper proceeded to prove by figures that the exchequer could not possibly provide for the overdue payments to the army, navy, and civil service, letting alone the interest on the foreign debt. Assuming the revenue to be 16,000,000 Turkish pounds, and the indebtedness to be 26,000,000, he asked how the deficiency was to be made up. I reminded his Excellency that this was an old story, and the depleted condition of the treasury was the normal state of affairs, but that, by hook or by crook, the Government, at the eleventh hour, had always been able to tide over its embarrassments by a recourse to temporary loans.

‘From whom?’ he asked. ‘England has been duped long enough, and will not lend another shilling; and there is not a security left to obtain a loan upon from Jew or Greek in Constantinople. Do you know what will happen? The Turks will repudiate the next six months’ interest on the foreign bonded debt.’

The impressive tone in which he made this announcement inclined me to believe that it was not a calcula-



tion on paper upon which he founded this alarming prophecy, and that he knew more than he chose to reveal. I asked if he were stating an opinion or a fact.

‘It is my opinion,’ he answered, ‘but you will find that I am right.’

I then asked if I might communicate his opinion to others.

‘To anyone you choose ; but I tell you beforehand that nobody will believe me.’

And nobody did. Of the two individuals to whom I thought the matter worth repeating, one, an ambassador, expressed surprise that I should attach any importance to information from such a source ; the other, a prominent banker who negotiated an enormous amount of Turkish bonds, laughed in derision, and remarked that my informant’s chief characteristic was mendacity. ‘As to the bonded interest, it would be punctually paid, as it always had been and always would be.’

In less than the time mentioned by Ignatieff, the Government declared its inability to pay the semi-annual interest, and down went the market value of all Turkish ‘securities.’

‘What did I tell you ?’ said Ignatieff, pulling up his horse as I met him on the road between Therapia and Buyukdera. ‘Was I not right ? Now I will tell you another thing. They will not pay the other



half! You will see—you will see!’ and off rode the Ambassador, chuckling with satisfaction at the success of his prophecy, or the discomfiture of the bondholders, or both.

I informed my two incredulous friends of this second ‘opinion’ of the astute diplomatist, but they indignantly refused to believe in the ‘other half.’ They had come to the conclusion that Ignatieff himself had persuaded the Government to this suicidal course in order to give another shake to the rickety throne of the Sultan, and that he was probably speculating in the funds. As to the crisis, they believed it would be temporary, and that the public credit would soon be restored.

In due time the repudiation—for such it amounted to—of the second half-year’s interest followed, and down to lower depths than ever went the Turkish bonds. The blind belief in the good faith of the Government was never more rudely dispelled, nor the ignorance of credulous bondholders more severely exposed. To use the words of a certain Turkish pasha who was discussing with me the situation of affairs—one of the few who spoke English, and who had acquired in England some practical acquaintance with the principles of political economy—‘The Turks have sucked the English orange dry, and have thrown the skin in their faces.’



Many anecdotes of General Ignatieff's cunning in diplomacy were current in Constantinople. I am not sure that I did not have the following from his own lips: The late Sultan Ábdul-Ázīz, if not absolutely mad, was sufficiently eccentric to cause constant irritation, not only to his Ministers, but to the foreign ambassadors. At one time he refused absolutely to grant an audience to any of the members of the diplomatic body, and this at a time when many of them, including the Russian Ambassador, were waiting anxiously for interviews. Ignatieff ascertained that, under the plea of official occupation, the Sultan was spending the greater part of his time in cock-fighting, an amusement which he greatly relished. He further ascertained that his Imperial Majesty was in want of fresh birds to supply the places of those killed in fight. Thereupon Ignatieff procured a fine-looking white fowl of the farmyard species, had it trimmed and spurred to resemble a gamecock, and sent it in a richly-decorated cage to the Sultan, with the respectful compliments of the Russian Ambassador. The ruse was successful. His Majesty, who at first was delighted with the gift, soon sent for the Ambassador to present himself at the palace, and explain, if he could, why the bird had no fight in him. Ignatieff went, and in the presence of the Sultan examined the bird, and with,



of course, immense astonishment and regret, acknowledged that it was quite unable to cope with his Majesty's superior gamecocks. A conference followed on the subject of gamecocks in general and this one in particular, and when the diplomatist had succeeded in drawing the Sultan into a conversational mood, he adroitly introduced the political matter he had so long awaited an opportunity to bring before his Majesty. Ignatieff returned to his Embassy triumphant over his colleagues, who were left out in the cold.

This reference to the late Sultan Ábdul-Ázīz recalls an amusing incident, with which I will close these off-hand recollections. During a 'Grand Council' of Ministers at the Sublime Porte, and in the midst of the discussion on a subject of vital importance, a mounted messenger from the palace arrived, bearing an imperial order to the Grand Vizier to wait upon his Majesty without an instant's delay. The Council broke up, and the Grand Vizier proceeded to the palace in hot haste. There he was informed that the Sultan was in the garden impatiently awaiting his arrival. As he entered, he saw his Majesty standing with a few attendants intently watching a fight between two gamecocks. The Grand Vizier, following the custom of all Turkish subjects when approaching the august presence, stopped at a respectful



distance, and commenced the series of salaams with downcast eyes and shrinking attitude appropriate to the occasion.

‘Never mind that now,’ exclaimed his Majesty excitedly, ‘but come here directly. Look—see—what did I tell you? Did I not say that Acmet’—pointing to one of the cocks—‘would whip Assam? Look, he is doing it.’

And this was what, and all, the Sultan had to communicate to his Grand Vizier.



## CHAPTER XXXIII.

## DINNERS AND DIPLOMATISTS.

WHEN in Constantinople I received an invitation to dinner from General Dervish Pasha 'to meet Lord Muffington.' Although it seemed a superfluity to go out of my hotel to *meet* that nobleman, at whose side I had been sitting at the *table d'hôte* for successive weeks, I eagerly accepted the invitation, having no little curiosity to dine *à la Turque*, especially under the auspices of that distinguished old soldier, General Dervish. He won his renown in the Montenegrin campaigns, in suppressing troubles in Herzegovina, and in tranquillizing Albania. In later years his name became familiar to English readers in connection with the political agitation in Egypt, when sent on a fruitless diplomatic mission to bring about a reconciliation between the famous Arabi Pasha and the Khedive.

The Turkish dinner, so far as there was anything Turkish about it, was a great disappointment.



Dervish evidently supposed that the best way to honour his English guest was to give him a dinner *à l'Anglais*, and in his attempt to transform his table into a London one he produced only a burlesque. The decoration of the hospitable board consisted of a straight row of common flowers, arranged in various receptacles, and some paper *bonbons*, the line being broken at intervals by black bottles of wine, corked and labelled. The dinner was on a par with the rest, and was prepared from a foreign *menu*, not a single Turkish dish making its appearance. I had hoped to see our host do to Lord Muffington what was done on one occasion by a Turkish pasha to an American Minister—namely, take a piece of meat from his own plate and with his fingers put it into the mouth of his chief guest. This is a distinguished mark of hospitality. Our Minister told me that he could not decide at first whether to swallow or eject the nauseous mouthful, but finally managed, when no eyes were upon him, to wipe it out of his mouth into his napkin.

Muffington was a very original man, affecting to require delicacy of treatment to his finely-organized *physique*. Thus, when taking a Turkish bath, orders were sent beforehand to lessen the temperature of the water, which, of course, did away with one of the chief features of that process, which is to reduce the



cuticle to a consistency easily removed by the 'rubber.' The rubber also was specially enjoined to moderate his manipulations to that gentle pressure more applicable to the handling of infants when bathed by their nurses than to a stout, middle-aged gentleman like his lordship.

He expressed to me a strong desire to visit the United States, having a good deal of curiosity to study the manners and customs of that strange people, who, among other peculiarities, he believed, 'resided for the most part in hotels, in lieu of private houses.' His objection to taking the proposed trip across the Atlantic was his dread of making 'chance acquaintances' on board the steamer. I suggested a private yacht. This he had thought of, but the difficulty there was that these small vessels are liable to take in water in a heavy sea. Did I believe that a yacht could be constructed that would not take in water? His lordship, at the time I speak of, was a pronounced philo-Turk, and was studying the Eastern Question on the spot, preparatory to denouncing Gladstone and his 'bag and baggage' policy at the next session of Parliament. Although this distinguished peer of the realm had swallowed, during his sojourn at Constantinople, any amount of Turkish sophistry, I very much doubted if he could manage the mouthful



of meat from the fingers of the Turk; hence my disappointment that the experiment was not made, as there would certainly have been a scene.

Lord Muffington's colleagues of the House of Lords would readily recognise the peer above described. Among the distinguishing characteristics of the Upper Chamber are the dignity and courtesy of that august assembly, but these qualities were sorely tried when Muffington rose to speak, for his long-winded, monotonous, and wandering speeches—generally upon questions which were no longer of immediate interest—resulted in thinning the House until his lordship found himself addressing empty benches. Such was the case when, on his return from Constantinople loaded and primed to annihilate Gladstone, he claimed the attention of the House. Gradually, almost imperceptibly, each noble lord glided from the Chamber, until the orator's flowers of rhetoric wasted their fragrance on the desert air. In this respect, at least, his lordship's political appeals might be considered the most 'moving' of any delivered in the House.

In contrast to Dervish Pasha's attempt to produce a dinner-table effect worthy of his English guest was a dinner given a few days after, at the Spanish Ambassador's, to the diplomatic body. It was in keeping with the admirable taste of Madame Man-



tilla, who is so favourably remembered when her husband was Minister at Washington. The entire length and breadth of the table, with the exception of a width of snowy damask for the plates and wine-glasses, was a flat parterre of rare flowers set in arabesque designs, with one only object, a tall central *épergne*, to break the level beauty of the flowery mosaic. Though this decoration has ceased to be a novelty, it was not so then, and it excited the admiration of even those veteran diners-out. When paying my *visite de digestion* a few days after, the English Ambassador came in, and his first remark was to ask our hostess where she got the happy idea for her table decoration. 'Where I get many of my inspirations,' she replied, turning to me—'from Washington.' She was always happy at compliments.

Perhaps nowhere more than in Oriental capitals are official entertainments of this kind more frequent and brilliant—brilliant, that is to say, in the distinguished character of the guests, their sparkling decorations, and the ornamentation of the banquet-table. In one respect, however, they are wanting in that very species of brilliancy which should elevate the dining-room to something more than a gathering-place for the appreciation of the delicacies of the *cuisine* and the wine-cellar. High-toned as is the



conversation, one seldom takes away with him anything worth remembering, and there is an absence of that social spirit which warms and vitalizes a less constrained company. Especially is this the case where the guests—well and familiarly known as they are to each other—are exclusively members of the diplomatic body. Politics, unless of a general character, are, for very good reasons, avoided; there are too many distinct national interests represented to discuss particular questions of State in each other's presence. Current gossip is too undignified for such an assemblage; and the latest fashions in ladies' dresses scarcely excites emotion in the breast of the trained and busy-brained diplomatist. Without being insipid, therefore, the table-talk sinks to a dull level of commonplace remarks, unenlivened by humour or quickened by originality. Such a thing as a good story or an observation exciting curiosity and general discussion is exceedingly rare. Formality, friendly observations, and little nothings between those seated next each other, constitute the intellectual part of the entertainment, and the dishes and the wines are the chief elements of its success.

I remember an Embassy dinner-party where the stiffness and restraint were so oppressive as to be insupportable. It was more like a repast of 'funeral baked meats' than a complimentary feast. No one



seemed to have a word to say for himself or herself, and the pauses in the little conversation that did go on between the host and his guests were alarming. I made up my mind that it was the presence of that mighty man the *Elchi*—as the Ambassador is called in Turkey—that overshadowed the lesser mortals around him with reverence and awe. As he was one of the most genial of men when out of harness, I thought I would attempt to break up the ice with a little humour. Speaking of grammatical inaccuracies, so prevalent among educated people, I asked his Excellency, who sat next to me, which he thought the more correct expression : seven and five *are* thirteen, or *is* thirteen ?

‘*Are* thirteen, of course,’ he replied.

‘That’s very curious,’ I rejoined, ‘for I was taught, when I went to school, that seven and five make *twelve*.’

The joke, old as it was, was new to him, and he was immensely tickled at being taken in. ‘Put the question to my wife,’ he said. As this required that I should address her ladyship across the table, the silent guests overheard the question, saw the point, and joined in the merriment which the answer evoked. The remainder of the dinner was as great a contrast to its commencement as a broad farce is after a heavy drama.



It was refreshing to turn from the painful restraint which ruled at a certain Ambassador's dinner, where I noted that the secretaries of the Embassy were never addressed by their chief, and scarcely dared to converse to each other, to a dinner one evening at the French Embassy. As I entered the drawing-room, where his Excellency in the midst of his staff received his guests, he called out to me, 'Don't step upon that rug, please; it is sacred.' At this the group of gentlemen gave a laugh, and I stood still, wondering how I was to avoid stepping upon the 'sacred' carpet, seeing that it entirely covered the floor between the door and where my host stood. It was a new and very costly Persian rug, but why was it placed there if not to be walked upon? I was relieved of my embarrassment by the Ambassador's next remark:

'All right; I'll make an exception in your case; come along.'

I told his Excellency, as he extended his hand, laughingly, to greet me, that I did not see the joke.

'The fact is,' he said, 'that this carpet, which I hope you appreciate and admire, has just been presented to me as a birthday gift by my staff of secretaries.'

In this way he called the attention of the other guests, as they entered the room, to his birthday gift,



and trifling as the little incident was, it served to show the familiar and kindly terms which existed between the chief and his subordinates. At the dinner-table, although a foreign Prince and other notabilities were present, he addressed each and all of the young gentlemen who composed his staff with the same frequency and freedom that he extended to his guests, drawing them into the general conversation, and requesting their opinions, as if entitled to equal regard. I doubt if anyone present did not desire to be again favoured with an invitation to the Ambassador's table. These two instances illustrate the distinctions of national temperament.

An experience of four consecutive years in Constantinople enables me to declare, without any reservation, that Turkish Ministers, so far as the evasion of pecuniary liabilities is concerned, are *par excellence* the best diplomatists the world over. Their success in declining to say 'No,' which absolute refusal might entail upon the Government the most disastrous results, and their unequalled *finesse* in keeping the claimant at arm's length by a thoroughly organized system of delay, under cover of invariable politeness, imperturbable calm, and the assertion of good intentions, which they never intend to fulfil, are too well known to the foreign diplomatist to be detailed here. Although, in the particular



case to which I have referred, the result was finally successful, it was considered an exceptional case, and in large measure brought about by political circumstances totally unexpected and unprovided for by the Turkish Government. A second exceptional case, where the Sublime Porte openly resisted the demands of the Great Powers—as will presently be shown—resulted in a foreign war, which brought upon Turkey a disastrous loss of territory, and a debt which she will never be able to discharge.

A brief account of the formalities attending a diplomatic interview at the Sublime Porte, drawn from my own experience, may serve as a sample of what has to be gone through for weeks, months, and it may be for years if the claimant has sufficient persistency of will and physical endurance to play the Turkish game of patience to the end.

Let us suppose that, after repeated applications for an interview—deferred and again deferred by the Minister under various plausible excuses—a day and hour are at last appointed, and the claimant finds himself in the anteroom of the Grand Vizier or the Minister, as the case may be. There he may wait for an indefinite period, or, if his Highness or his Excellency is prepared with a fresh argument for delay, the wearied applicant is at once admitted to his presence. On the appearance of the claimant the



Minister rises to receive him, points with a graceful flourish to a chair beside himself, and requests the visitor to be seated. The latter, if conversant with the etiquette to be observed, declines the honour until his Excellency resumes his own seat. When this formality has been complied with, one might suppose that the two gentlemen would at once enter into conversation on the business before them. Nothing of the kind. A pause ensues, during which no word is spoken by either party. It is relieved at last by the appearance of a servant carrying a platter, on which are two diminutive cups of coffee, prepared *à la Turque*, with the grounds in it. On the servant's arm hang two embroidered napkins, to wipe the lips when the coffee has been drunk. The tray is first presented to the visitor, who, if up to the requirements of the occasion, declines to take his cup until his Excellency is first served. When this movement has been accomplished, the two gentlemen silently sip the beverage—which is of the best Mocha—and having touched, each, the napkin to his lips, the servant, backing out, retires from the presence. Then his Excellency, assuming an expression of extreme distress of mind, apologizes, in very courteous French, for the annoying delay, caused both to himself and to the claimant, in this affair, an affair 'which is absorbing the attention of the Government, who are most



anxious to bring it to a successful termination.' He then goes over the several points at issue, and, touching upon 'difficulties'—which exist only in his own imagination—discusses what has already been discussed *ad nauseam*, and finally engages—as he has repeatedly engaged himself before—to bring the matter up at the next Council of Ministers, and to report the result without delay. The interview ended, the two rise, exchange the usual courtesies, and the claimant bows himself out.

In most instances—I do not say in all—the Turkish Minister dismisses the subject from his mind the moment the claimant has left the room. The latter descends the worn steps of the Sublime Porte—more properly speaking the Sublime *Perte*—under the pleasing illusion that he has impressed upon the Minister the fact that he himself is not to be discouraged by any amount of delay or evasion, but means to pursue the prosecution, or the persecution, to the bitter end. He knows by this time that the struggle is now reduced to a war of wits, and that the one who holds out the longer will be the victor. It is not only a case of patience, but of temper, and that the man who fails to control himself, however much provoked by the studied chicanery of his opponent, weakens—and perhaps irretrievably—his position.

In my own case, I was seldom kept waiting when I



had a special appointment with a Minister at the Sublime Porte, but on one occasion I found the American Minister was engaged in a conference, and I was delayed for a considerable time. When at last I was admitted, I found the Pasha in a very bad humour, and, being on intimate terms with him, asked what disturbed him.

‘Another of your infernal missionary cases,’ he replied. ‘A seller of Bibles in an interior village gathered a disturbing crowd in the street, and refused to move on when directed to do so by the police. Thereupon someone in the crowd threw a stone, which, unluckily, broke a window in the missionary’s house, and now a claim is made upon the Turkish Government for an apology and reparation, on the ground of violation of domicile. Why,’ continued the Pasha, ‘do your people send missionaries to Turkey to interfere with our religion, and hawk Bibles in the public streets? We do not send Moham-medans to your country to sell copies of the Koran.’

‘But why *don’t* you, Excellence?’ I replied, taking the humorous side of the question. ‘Your countrymen are noted for their hospitality and courtesy; why not return the compliment, and, for each missionary sent here, send a Mussulman to America to sell the Koran?’

His Excellency was infinitely amused, declared it



a good joke, and said he would make the suggestion at the next meeting of the Council of Ministers.

Having thus got him into good-humour, we proceeded to business.

The celebrated Conference of the Great Powers, which was held at Constantinople in December, 1876, and closed in January, brought to that capital the Marquis of Salisbury as special Commissioner on the part of England. From the moment of his lordship's arrival until the breaking up of the Conference, he lost no opportunity for showing the Turks that a perfect *entente cordiale* existed between himself and the Russian Ambassador. They were seen almost daily together, *bras dessus et bras dessous*, walking, talking, and driving like political allies and bosom friends. Brutus and Cassius, Damon and Pythias, and other examples of devoted friendship, were nothing to the fraternal embraces of England and Russia on this occasion. The two keen-witted ambassadors perfectly understood each other, and probably nudged each other's elbows as they observed the success of their policy upon the Turks. The Ministers of the Sublime Porte were nonplussed and disgusted, for they had built their hopes of the designs of the Conference being frustrated on the political antagonisms and jealousy between England and Russia. Lord Salisbury's policy in this respect



was above all praise, and the result was that it promoted harmony in the councils of the commissioners, favoured unity of action, and left the Ottoman Government solely responsible for the failure of the Conference.

Lord Salisbury seems to have anticipated the hopelessness of the attempt to bring the Turks to reason and avert the threatened war between Russia and Turkey. At an evening reception given by Lady Salisbury, I remarked, in conversation with the Marquis on the character of the Turks, that their motto seemed to be '*Après nous, le déluge.*' Always ready with a pointed epigram, he replied: 'If they are not precious careful it will be, this time, *le déluge before* après nous.' And it was.

A celebrated English lady, noted for her Turkish sympathies, after buttonholing Lord Salisbury for a good half-hour while she endeavoured—as she afterwards said—'to set the Marquis right with respect to the Turks,' at last released him. Turning to me, he said: 'She is a very good talker, but she spoiled the whole of her argument by her closing remark, namely, that "the only defect in the character of the Turkish officials is their want of administrative ability." Now, a greater defect than the want of administrative ability could not be charged against any Government.'



*À propos* to the collapse of the Conference, an amusing encounter of wits occurred at an evening party given by the famous Hobart Pasha, at which was present an English lady, who, in opposition to Hobart's sneer at the Conference—he being at the time an 'Admiral' in the Turkish navy, and under Turkish pay—twitted him upon his anti-English position.

'What are those things dangling on your coat?' asked the lady.

'They are my colours,' he replied.

'They are very dirty colours,' she responded, 'and you'd better take them down.'

'Your ladyship will take down yours before I do mine,' was Hobart's parting shot, which, as things turned out, was a hard hit at the wife of one of the commissioners at the Conference, for a few days after the delegates returned home, as the Turks put it, 'with their tails between their legs.'

Hobart came up to me and others during the evening to repeat this conversation with infinite glee, but he must have sobered down when the Russo-Turkish War followed the breaking up of the Conference without the intervention of a single Power to avert the disasters which fell upon the Turkish Empire through its own stupidity and folly.

Hobart Pasha was a plucky and astute naval com-



mander, but between us, personally, there was no love lost. As an American I regarded him as a poor specimen of the gallant Englishman, when, as is reported, he sold out his commission as captain in the English navy in order to become a blockade-runner and supply the slave-holders with articles of consumption, presumably for the benefit of his own pocket; while I, as a friend to Greece, held him in disesteem for chasing and endeavouring to capture Greek vessels running the blockade in Crete, not for the pecuniary benefit of the owners, but to supply the necessities of life to their fellow-Christians engaged in a life-and-death struggle with their Mohammedan oppressors.

This reference to the Cretan rebellion recalls a notable instance of the fidelity of the Greek officials of the Turkish Government to the Empire whose subjects they are. The Turkish Ambassador to Greece, at the period I resided there, was Photiades Bey—subsequently Pasha. Like most of his fellow-countrymen under Turkish rule, his sympathies were with his kindred of Greece, and it was a subject of astonishment to me how he reconciled his feelings of commiseration for and sympathy with the Greeks in their efforts to assist their countrymen in Crete with the faithful and stern performance of his official duties during this trying period. His vigilance was keen and unremitting, and not an act nor an inten-



tion, in secret conclave or in open defiance on the part of the Greeks, escaped his attention or failed to be reported to the Sublime Porte at Constantinople. The Greeks understood the position of the Ambassador, and while they feared his Argus eyes, respected his political integrity. It was a curious and unexampled condition, these antagonistic relations between a foreign Ambassador and the people whom he loved, and yet over whom he exercised a despotic surveillance. Photiades Bey was a cultivated man, a learned numismatist—possessing an admirable collection of rare medals and coins—and a most amusing companion. I once asked him how he managed to retain his popularity with the Athenians, while thwarting their plans and betraying their conspiracies. ‘By letting them know,’ he said, ‘that my heart is with the Greeks, and my head with my master of Turkey.’

The most remarkable man, in point of originality, in the diplomatic body at Constantinople was Mr. Maynard, the American Minister. He exemplified to a rare degree—what is characteristic of all the foreign representatives of his country—perfect independence of action. Speaking in general terms, the Ambassadors and Ministers of the European Powers are but a step or two removed from the position of confidential clerks, and in all cases outside accustomed



routine work resort to the *ad referendum* policy, assuming no personal responsibility, and acting only under orders from the Home Government when that Government have decided upon the question at issue.

The American Minister, on the contrary, wields, as a general rule, a free lance, and, assuming all the responsibility of his actions, proceeds to manage the case according to his best judgment. If he succeeds in bringing matters to a satisfactory issue, he receives a despatch from the Department of State expressing the 'approval' of the Government. If he fails—by reason of incorrect judgment or action—he receives, should the case be an important one, an intimation that the President is prepared to accept his resignation. I think it will be found that the latter course has been of very rare occurrence.

Maynard was one of those who wielded his lance in small matters, as in great ones, with an extraordinary freedom of action. He possessed no diplomatic training, and came fresh from the political caucuses, etc., of Tennessee to represent his country and protect the interests of the American missionaries in that labyrinth of Oriental intrigue and deception. He was a man of the highest integrity, and possessed a large share of native wit and shrewdness. He soon discovered that he was no match for the Turk in the



sinuous policy of the Sublime Porte, and determined to adopt direct methods based upon the simple geometric rule taught him in the village school, that a straight line is the shortest between two points. On the *ex pede Herculem* principle, I will give an example of the course he adopted in a very insignificant case which fell under my observation. One of the American missionaries, under permission of a *firman* granted by the Turkish Government, had caused to be erected a dwelling and school-house in accordance with the architect's plan, as approved by the Minister of Public Works. As the building progressed, the missionary decided to add a porter's lodge near the main entrance, but it did not occur to him as necessary to obtain additional permission from the Government for this trifling object. One of those unemployed hangers-on at the Porte, who are ever on the look-out for *backsheish* from the unwary foreigner, observed the new building going up, and threatened the missionary to report the case to the Government. A Turkish pound or two would have stopped the fellow's intermeddling, but this the missionary refused to pay, as coming under the head of bribery and corruption. The result was that the Minister of Public Works put a stop to the erection of the entire building. The missionary applied to the American Minister to obtain redress, and the



latter sent his dragoman repeatedly to the Porte, but without success. Maynard, finally, concluded that it was time, in diplomatic parlance, to 'take the stick,' and hastily putting on his never-well-brushed hat, and discarding both dragoman and carriage, stalked over on foot to the Porte, his long hair streaming in the wind, and his features sternly fixed to meet the lion in his den. But the official he demanded to see was not the Minister of Public Works—to whom the case pertained—but his Highness the Grand Vizier! Let an Englishman imagine the Turkish Ambassador at London going direct to the Prime Minister with reference to the erection of a chimneypot to his Embassy building, and the comicality of the situation in the present case will be apparent. The Grand Vizier stood aghast at this unprecedented proceeding, and, stating that the affair did not lie within his jurisdiction, referred the Minister to the Department of Public Works. Maynard declined to have any further relations with the latter department, and, in polite but firm language, stated that if within twenty-four hours permission was not formally furnished for the completion of the missionary buildings, he should lay the case before the *Sultan*!

By the time the Grand Vizier had recovered from his astonishment, the American Minister had bowed



himself out of the presence chamber, and was striding back with satisfied composure to his Legation. The affair, as related by the Grand Vizier, was quickly circulated all over the town, the foreign diplomatists receiving it as another instance of that remarkable eccentricity which distinguished the conduct of the American representative abroad. It is needless to add that before the expiration of the allotted 'twenty-four hours' the required document from the Porte was in Maynard's hands.

On one occasion the American Minister caused a good deal of anxiety to his personal friends by losing himself on a Turkish island. A yacht-party, of which Maynard was the principal guest, was got up to visit the island. No sooner had the party landed than Maynard, with his usual independency of action, walked off by himself to investigate the island. When missed by the others he could not be found, nor was it known which direction he had taken. At first, no anxiety was felt as to his personal safety, for the day was a fine one, and it was believed he would turn up in course of time. But hours elapsed, and the shades of evening were falling over the landscape, without any signs of the wanderer. Another hour and the island was enveloped in darkness, while the dinner on board the steam-yacht was getting cold. Shoutings and blowing of the steam-whistle were un-



availing, and then the affair looked serious. The most anxious, where all were anxious, was Mehmet, the *kavas* of the American Legation, a faithful Turk who had been employed for many years, and whose special duty was to accompany the Minister wherever he went, and to look after his Excellency's requirements. From the moment of his master's disappearance, Mehmet had been in pursuit of him, and when he returned from his unsuccessful search, the poor fellow was almost desperate.

It was finally decided to send to the nearest village to get up a search-party among the natives. This mission Mehmet was on the point of executing, when, to the intense relief of the company, a row-boat was perceived rounding a headland and approaching the yacht, with Maynard sitting in the stern. When the Minister came on board, his manner was as unconcerned as if nothing unusual had occurred except the delay of the dinner, for which he offered his apologies. He admitted that, absorbed by the attractions of the island, he had lost his way, and, owing to his utter ignorance of any language but his own, had found it difficult to obtain from the natives any information as to his whereabouts. However, by dint of an exchange of gesticulations, he had managed to let them know that a yacht was waiting for him on the other side of the



island. Thereupon two Greeks owning a boat were found to row him along the coast until the yacht was discovered.\*

The happiest man of the party, when Maynard turned up, was Mehmet, the *kavas*, who, for an apathetic Turk, was moved to extraordinary demonstrations of delight; but these soon gave way to a revulsion of feeling, and for days following he went about his work muttering to himself and in a very dejected state of mind. When asked what was the matter, he replied: 'I'm afraid, Effendi, I shall never hold up my head again. For four-and-twenty years I have been a faithful servant to this Legation, and *I never lost a Minister before!*'

\* Speaking of the universal habit of gesticulation in Eastern countries, Maynard once said: 'The difference between the Anglo-Saxon and the Oriental in conversation is that the former talks with his mouth and the latter talks all over.'



## CHAPTER XXXIV.

## LAST DAYS AT CONSTANTINOPLE.

THE Turk is apathetic, not easily moved to excitement, and readily accepts the dispensations of life as unavoidable, and consequently not to be controlled by human will. The sensitive point of attack is his religious faith; touch *that* and he is aroused, not only to action, but to something approaching frenzy. The Turkish soldier, under ordinary circumstances a mere piece of animated mechanism, becomes zealous for vengeance when the green flag of the Prophet waves on the field of battle, and he dies with resignation, if not with joy, being thoroughly persuaded that he exchanges a lifeless body for the material ecstasies of paradise.\* The Turkish army fought

\* 'The sword,' said Mohammed, 'is the key of heaven and hell; all who draw it in the cause of the faith will be rewarded with temporal advantages; every drop shed of their blood, every peril and hardship endured by them, will be registered on high as more meritorious than even fasting or praying. If they



bravely and well in the war with Russia, and when defeat sent them home, under circumstances which admitted of not a single consolation, they cried 'Kismet' ('It is written'), and thought no more of the matter. With the educated classes the case was different. With the eyes of the foreigner, and especially of the representatives of the European Powers, constantly upon them, they felt keenly the mortification of defeat, followed as it was by a treaty of peace which severed territories from the Turkish dominion and saddled a debt of indemnity upon the nation almost impossible to discharge, and which is not yet discharged, but held over them as a convenient menace by Russia whenever any political demands from that Government are received with hesitation by the Sublime Porte.

I went down to San Stefano on March 3, 1878, the day the 'preliminary treaty' of peace was signed, and found the streets of the little, but now notable town filled with Russian officers strolling about at their ease, and idle Turks and foreigners—drawn thither by curiosity—gazing upon the 'invaders' as if they were on exhibition at a village fair. But there was a sense

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fall in battle, their sins will at once be blotted out, and they will be transported to paradise, there to revel in eternal pleasures in the arms of black-eyed houris.'



of sadness pervading the place, and voices were subdued in conversation out of sympathy for a people who, for the moment, were passing through a bitter experience, the end of which no one could foresee. Inside one of the houses—now pointed out to visitors as a historic building—sat the Russian Ambassador, with the treaty spread out on a table before him ready for signature, awaiting the arrival of his Turkish colleague. The latter, Safvet Pasha, an old acquaintance of mine at the Sublime Porte, passed me in his carriage on his way to perform that humiliating duty, his furrowed cheeks and blinking eyes bent downwards, the personification of despair. Mentally, I forgave him on the spot for the many delays, subterfuges, and other annoyances which the honest-hearted old Minister had so often caused me—during the prosecution of a case against the Imperial Government—knowing that he was but pursuing, as a faithful servant, the devious ways of Turkish diplomacy.

As I passed in front of 'Headquarters,' upon the balcony of which building a group of fine-looking Russian officers were sitting smoking, I noticed two or three Turks of the better class standing on the opposite side-walk, gazing with apparent admiration at the scene on the balcony. I crossed over with my companion, who spoke Turkish, and asked him to



listen and repeat to me their remarks. They were praising the appearance of the Russian officers.

‘What noble faces! What a soldierly bearing! Ah, if all Russians were like these, what a different opinion we should have of them!’ one remarked.

‘Tell him,’ said I to my friend, ‘that he is admiring the men who have just vanquished his country. How can he do it?’

‘I know that,’ said the Turk, ‘but it is their Government we hate, not these soldiers. What could they do but obey? Mashallah! they are fine fellows, I tell you.’

And ‘fine fellows’ they appeared to be in the eyes of the people of Pera and Stamboul wherever they went, for not only were the shopkeepers and the hotels enriched by their lavish expenditure of Russian roubles, but they fairly magnetized all with whom they came in contact by their martial appearance as they sauntered down the Grand Rue, or through the thronged passages of the bazaars, with a kind and hearty word to this one and to that, their exhilarating spirits being intensified by the fact that an arduous war was just over and that they were masters of the situation.

But to this bright side of the picture there was a painful contrast that overshadowed society, and that was the destitution and suffering existing at Stam-



boul among the refugees from Bulgaria. Driven by the horrors or fear of the horrors of war from their native towns and villages, most of them bringing away only the clothes upon their backs, whole families, from grandparents to suckling babes, fled across the plains and mountains until, weary, worn, and famished, they reached Stamboul, homeless, helpless, and reduced to the last stages of human misery. The Turks are a charitable and sympathetic race to their own people, and as fast as the wretched refugees arrived, temporary protection was found for them in the public buildings until they could be provided for in the interior towns of Asiatic Turkey. The mosques were reserved for the women and children. St. Sophia, once the pride and glory of the Greeks, surmounted by its golden cross, now the pride and glory of the Mussulmans, its cross replaced by the crescent, was full of these helpless families, for there was no other place for them. I went over to see the sight, but was refused admittance. I had never been refused before; but now, occupied as the edifice was by women and children, the foot of the infidel was not permitted to pollute the sacred enclosure. I tried to bribe the guard with *backsheish*, but, strange to say, and for the first time in my experience, the Turk shook his head at the silver coin he longed to pass from my pocket



into his. Suddenly an idea occurred to me. I walked away from the mosque and down a neighbouring street until I found a baker's shop. There I purchased as many rolls of bread as I could make into a manageable bundle, and carried it with my own hands to the door of the mosque. The faithful guardian's stern features relaxed with a smile of approval, and he thanked me, in Turkish—throwing in, no doubt, a text from the Koran—for my very generous offering. I fear that the generosity was somewhat debased by mundane considerations on my part; for, as he reached out his hands to take the bundle, I withdrew it, shaking my head and pointing to the door, to indicate that the condition of the gift was that I should myself distribute the rolls to the hungry ones within. Again I was refused, but as he appeared to hesitate, I reproduced the silver coin, and turned the scale of doubt in my favour.

Taking 'the shoes from off my feet, for the place whereon I stood was holy ground,' I replaced them with a pair from a row of slippers placed within the doorway for the use of the faithful, and, entering the vast edifice, beheld a touching sight. The entire surface of the marble floor beneath the grand dome was occupied by women, squatting on the pavement *à la Turque*, or lying on straw beds, which had been



sent in for the accommodation of the sick and infirm. Some were suckling their infants, some were comforting their children, and others were lying inert, as if their last ray of hope had expired, and they were waiting for the relief of death. Others, again, presented a somewhat contented appearance, as if the repose and safety they were then in compensated for the sufferings and dangers from which they had just escaped. I don't know how many hundreds of these refugees were before me, but they covered the floor so completely that only a narrow passage was left open for those to pass through who supplied their wants. As I stood contemplating the spectacle, I found that I was being followed up closely by one of the attendants, who signed to me to distribute my bread at once, and not loiter an unnecessary moment. The distribution was soon made, and I was then politely conducted to the outer door and bowed into the street. It was evident that the guardian had exceeded his orders in admitting me on any terms.

I was a good deal surprised at the apathy with which my offering was received by these unfortunates. Not one of them expressed a word of thanks, or seemed in great need of food. Probably they had already received their first meal for the day, for many of those who took the loaves hastily concealed them in the bosoms of their dresses, or



passed them on to their children. But, hungry or not for the moment, they looked pale and miserable enough to excite the most profound compassion.

I don't know how far the Turkish ladies of Stamboul exerted themselves to come to the relief of the thousands of refugees scattered over the city, but the ladies of the Christian quarter of Constantinople, following the example set by the wives of the foreign ambassadors, took up the matter with that earnestness and devotion which women always give to charitable work. Thus it became 'the fashion' for ladies to lay aside their sketching and embroidery for awhile, and to knit common shawls and cut out homespun dresses for the refugees at Stamboul. Lady Layard, the wife of the British Ambassador, was indefatigable in her efforts, as head of the ladies' committee, to promote the charitable movement. I recall a pleasant dinner-party at the British Embassy, a few evenings before my departure from Constantinople, when the guests on retiring from the dining-room were served in the *salon* with coffee and strips of old linen, the latter to be rolled into bandages or picked into shreds of lint for the use of the hospitals. It was curious and amusing to see a drawing-room full of diplomatists and ladies making themselves useful as well as ornamental in this way at a formal dinner-party, the gentlemen being as much absorbed



in their novel occupation as if they were unraveling the intricate threads of Turkish diplomacy, the ladies as if they were picking to pieces the frivolous characters in Oriental society. Lady Layard's watchful eyes allowed no shirking of the duty imposed upon each, and in the midst of a buzz of conversation the work went on as if a male and female 'sewing circle' were conducting business. While the Ambassador entertained one of his colleagues with the history of an 'old master' that hung upon the wall, or, perhaps, related an incident of personal experience during his famous researches at Nineveh, Count Corti, the Italian Minister, who had sent for his photographic album of American beauties, dilated upon the charms of the originals from whom he had received them.

'Do you mean to say, Count, that American ladies give their photographs to unmarried gentlemen?' said a satirical lady across the room.

'No; that is to say, not as a rule.'

'Ah, I see, they made an exception in your case, I suppose; you were such a pet in society.'

As the Count, although exceeding clever, was not an Adonis, and had long passed the middle age, this hit at the weak spot in his character will be appreciated by those who knew the bachelor diplomatist at Washington and London.



On his knees, holding the end of a strip of linen, while an ambassadress manipulated the other end into a compact roll, was the venerable Count Pisani, Chief of the Chancellerie, her ladyship, from her slow process of rolling, being apparently in no haste to destroy the *tableau* by relieving the stiff-kneed old gentleman from his painful and undignified position. Thus humour and amusement enlivened charity, and a goodly amount of work was accomplished before the pleasant party dispersed. *Dulce et decorum est*, under such circumstances, for Christian men and women to prevent *others* from dying for their country, even if those others be wretched Moham-medan refugees clasping their emaciated hands in prayers to Allah on the cold pavement of a Turkish mosque.

As, a few days after this, the steamer in which I embarked from Constantinople rounded Seraglio Point, the lustre of an Oriental sunset gilding the crescents on mosques and minarets, and glorifying a city which, examined from within, presents all the characteristics of misgovernment, poverty, and debasement, I mentally exclaimed: 'How long, how long, O you "Great Powers" of Europe, is this condition of political affairs to be upheld, and millions of discontented Christian subjects in the European provinces of Turkey, having not one link



of political, religious, or social sympathy with their conquerors, to continue to languish under Mussulman misrule, while you statesmen are deciding, with jealous temporizings and diplomatic evasions, the everlasting Eastern Question ?'

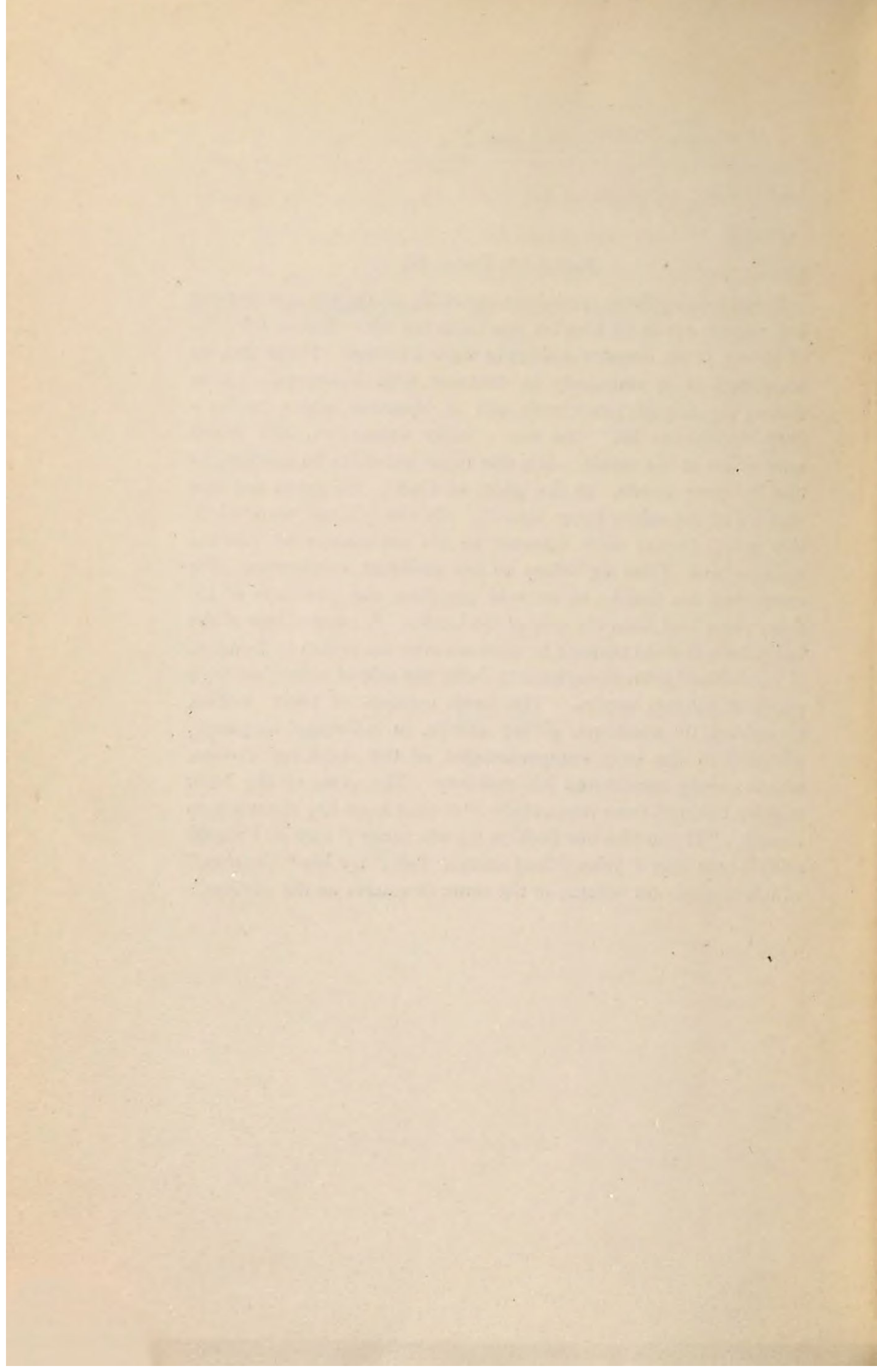
THE END.



## NOTE TO PAGE 68.

Since writing these reminiscences of Mr. Spurgeon, a statement has met my eye in an English journal to the effect that he led a life of luxury at his country residence near London. If the fact be as stated, it is singularly in contrast with Spurgeon's habits during my acquaintance with him at Mentone, where he led a very abstemious life. He was a strict vegetarian, and drank only water at his meals. His one cigar per diem he smoked, to use his own words, 'to the glory of God.' He spent not one shilling of his salary upon himself. Of the £1,500 received in this way, £1,000 were devoted to his orphanage or clerical college, and £500 as salary to his assistant clergyman. He supported his family, so he told me, from the proceeds of his dairy farm and from the sale of his books. A copy of one of the latter he was good enough to send me after his return to London. It is entitled 'John Ploughman's Talk,' the sale of which had then reached 340,000 copies. The book consists of short stories, illustrated by woodcuts, giving advice, in colloquial language, adapted to the easy comprehension of the working classes, which chiefly constituted his auditory. The style of the book may be inferred from the preface : 'A pickle-jar has these words upon it : "If you like our pickles, try our sauce ;" and so I would add, if you like "John Ploughman's Talk," try his "Pictures," which is a second volume of the same character as the present.'







PRESS NOTICES OF

# THE GREEKS OF TO-DAY.

BY THE  
HON. CHARLES K. TUCKERMAN.

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'This appears to be a singularly able, instructive, and temperate book. Taken together, these articles form a comprehensive study of the modern Greek, considered from a local, picturesque, social, political, moral and religious point of view. Mr. Tuckerman is fully aware of the extreme difficulty of the task he undertakes. He is analytical in his criticisms, and keen in his scrutiny. He holds the balance with impartial hands. His style is eminently critical, and his temper admirable. He has a keen taste for picturesque effect, an admirable method of reciting an anecdote; his insight into character is searching. In a singularly able and exhaustive chapter, the character of the modern Greek is discussed at length. The great merit of the book is its absence of enthusiasm and calm judicial tone. The author is always temperate and invariably courteous. He is never dull or dictatorial. He carries the reader along with him from chapter to chapter, and we feel when we put the book aside that we have been listening to a singularly well-informed and well-educated gentleman. More than this, we have acquired an unprejudiced opinion on the subject of the modern Greek.'—*The Observer* (London).

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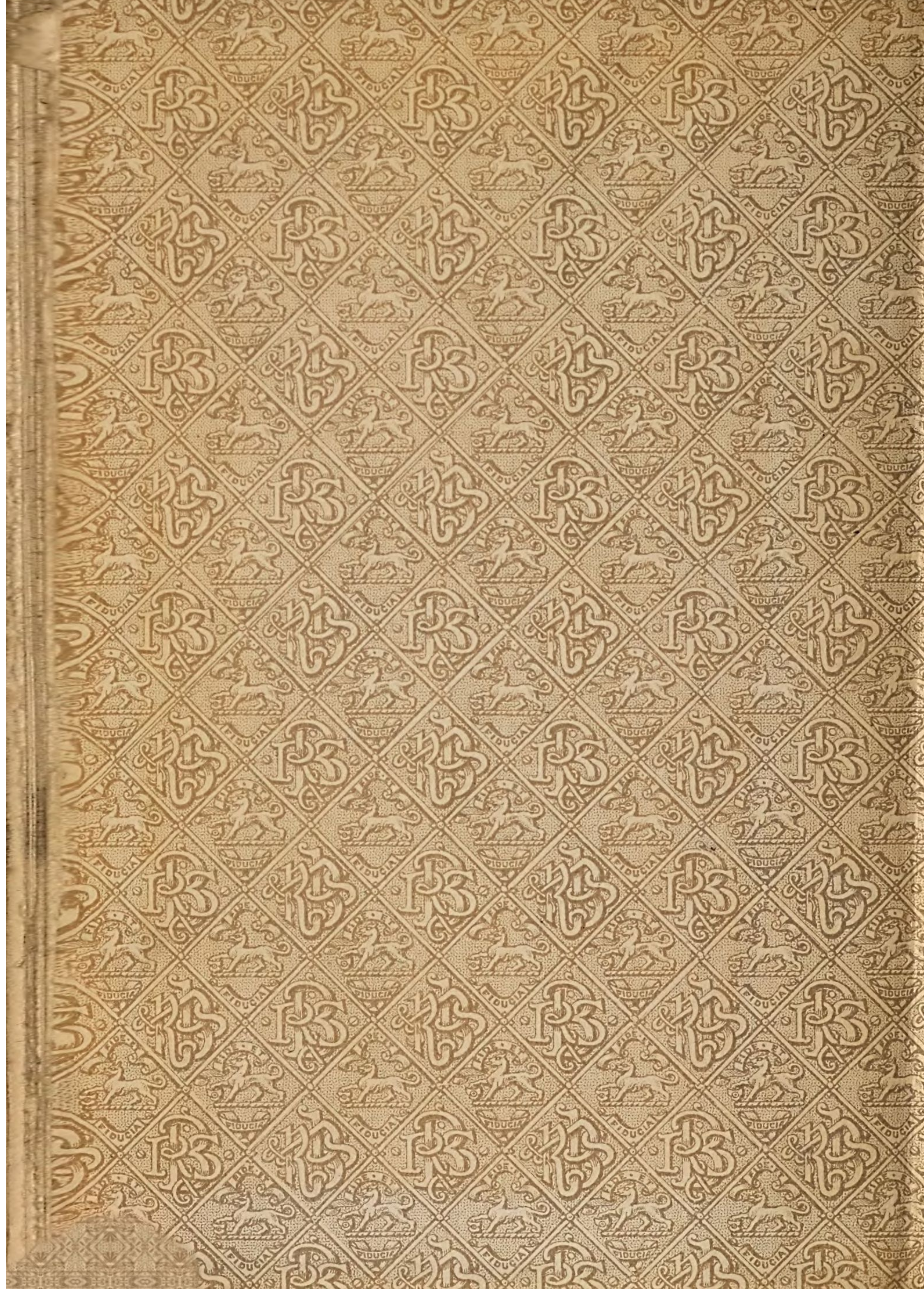




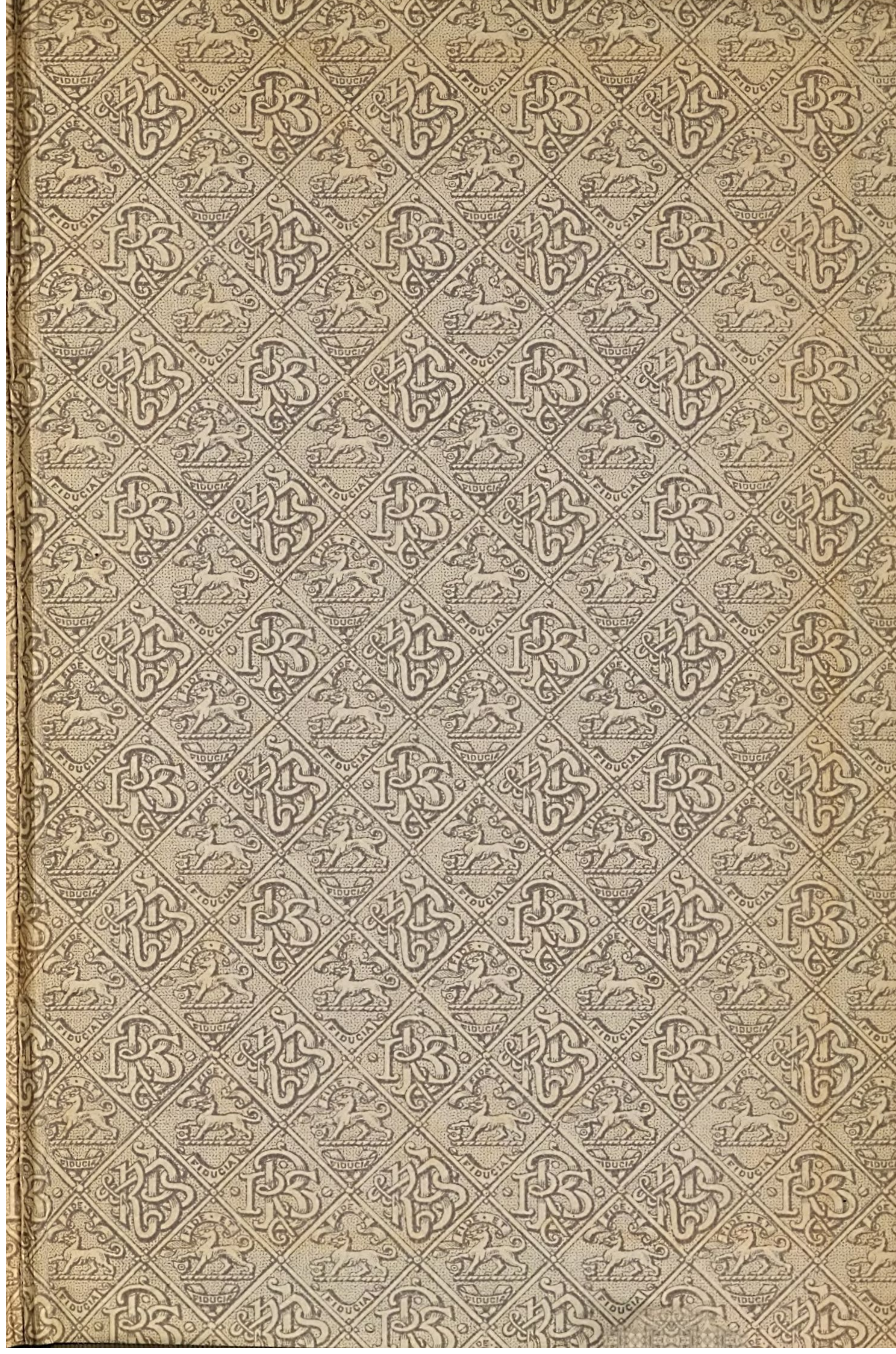


















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London 1895

Biogr. 1177 c-2

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